

## City of McPherson

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### Testimony in Support of SB Bill 548 & SB 549

Presented by Mayor Tom Brown

City of McPherson, Kansas

March 9, 202

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chairman, Madame Ranking Minority, as Mayor of the City of McPherson, I offer this written testimony in support of *SB 548 & SB 549*.

The City of McPherson appreciates and supports the intent of *SB 548 & SB 549* to address the issues the lack of fair and equitable representation of municipalities in the groundwater management districts, particularly in Groundwater Management District 2 (GMD2) has caused. The current imbalance discrepancy and the inability of municipalities to be fairly heard continues to be a serious concern for the City of McPherson.

Over the years, McPherson has become an industrial powerhouse due to its competitive advantages, namely its extraordinarily competitive and reliable electric utility situation, central location, and access to skilled labor within the central Kansas region. McPherson was the fifth fastest growing rural industrial community in the United States in 2018. I have been the Mayor of McPherson for the past twelve years. During that time, McPherson's industrial businesses have continued to prosper, creating well over 1,500 new job opportunities for job seekers in the region and contributing over half of the total 18.5 billion + dollars of GDP to the economy.

The City of McPherson supports the ability to have municipalities fairly represented on the GMD2 Board or be exempt from its control on all matters relating to water rights.

As Chair of the Regional Economic Area Partnership (REAP), I want to emphasize that REAP represents over 35+ cities, counties, institutions of higher education and public school districts. All of these entities have water needs. The 1-35 corridor Megapolis is a key economic development region. It will continue to become a bigger and bigger part of the national economy. If we want to grow Kansas through industry and education of our schools at all levels, we have to have the ability to work directly with the State professionals at the Division of Water Resources on all matters related to water rights.

The City of McPherson appreciates the effort to bring forth *SB 548* and *SB 549*, and supports its intent to address the lack of representation and delays in permit applications of municipalities in the groundwater management districts, particularly in GMD2.

Thank You,

Tom Brown

Mayor, City of McPherson, Kansas

Mayor

*Thomas A. Brown*

Commissioner of Public Facilities

*Gary L. Mehl*

Commissioner of Public Works

*Larry E. Wiens*