

HOUSE BILL No. 2234

AN ACT concerning rural water districts; relating to the procedure for release of lands from a district; repealing K.S.A. 82a-630.

*Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

Section 1. (a) Terms used in this section shall have the meanings provided by K.S.A. 82a-612, and amendments thereto.

(b) If certain lands included within a district cannot be economically or adequately served by the facilities of the district, the owners of such lands may petition the board of directors of the district to release those lands from the district. The petition shall describe the lands requested to be released and shall be signed by at least 75% of the total number of the owners of the lands requested to be released. The board of directors may prescribe a fee to be collected from the petitioners for the purpose of offsetting costs reasonably expected to be incurred by the district in hearing the request for release. The petition for release, together with a verified list of the names and addresses of all owners of the land requested to be released, and the prescribed fee, shall be filed with the secretary of the district.

(c) If the board of directors of the district finds the petition to be in proper form, the board shall conduct a hearing on the petition for release. Notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be mailed to all owners of land requested to be released not later than 10 days before the hearing. The hearing may be continued from time to time without further notice to landowners. In considering the petition for release, the board shall consider whether the lands requested to be released cannot be economically or adequately served by the facilities of the district and whether the release would be in the best interests of the landowners and the district, based on the following factors:

(1) Whether the petitioners for release of lands have applied for one or more benefit units to serve the lands requested to be released, which applications have been denied;

(2) the length of time before the board of directors reasonably expect to make water service available to the lands requested to be released;

(3) whether water service is available from another source if the lands are released from the district;

(4) if water service is available from the district to the lands requested to be released, the relative cost of obtaining such water service, as determined by the district, compared to the additional value of the lands after water service is made available;

(5) if water service is available from the district, the cost of obtaining such water service, as determined by the district, compared to the cost of obtaining water from another source;

(6) whether any applicable law will prevent any other water suppliers from serving the lands requested to be released; and

(7) whether the district's interest in maintaining the integrity of its territory is outweighed by the landowners' need to obtain a source of supply of water to the lands requested to be released.

(d) The board may approve the release of all or part of the lands requested to be released or may deny the request. The burden of proof shall be on the petitioners for release. The board of directors shall make a determination on the petition for release within 120 days after its receipt, shall record its findings in the minutes of the district and shall mail a copy of such findings to each petitioner within seven days.

(e) Any owner of land requested to be released from the district who is dissatisfied with the determination of the board of directors on the petition for release may bring an action in the district court of the county in which the district is located to determine if the board of directors of the district abused its discretion in making such determination. Such appeal shall be filed within 30 days after the final decision of the board.

(f) If the board of directors of the district approves the petition, or if the district court on appeal determines that the board abused its discretion in denying release, a copy of the board's action approving the release or of the district court's order on appeal, as the case may be, shall be transmitted to the chief engineer and to the county clerk, who shall note the change of such district's boundaries.

Sec. 2. K.S.A. 82a-630 is hereby repealed.

Sec. 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the Kansas register.

I hereby certify that the above BILL originated in the HOUSE, and passed that body

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*Speaker of the House.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Chief Clerk of the House.*

Passed the SENATE \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*President of the Senate.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Secretary of the Senate.*

APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Governor.*