



**Before the Senate Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee regarding HB 2302
Testimony of the Kansas Water Authority by
Dawn Buehler, Chair of the Kansas Water Authority
March 15, 2023**

Chairman Kerschen and members of the Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, it is my pleasure to stand here before you. I am Dawn Buehler, Chair of the Kansas Water Authority. The Kansas Water Authority (KWA) is a statutorily-created advisory board consisting of 13 voting members who are appointed by the Governor or Legislative Leadership. These voting members serve on a volunteer basis. State agency directors serve as ex officio members. According to statute, the Water Authority is within and a part of the Kansas Water Office. The primary duties of the Water Authority are to advise the Governor, Legislature and Director of the Water Office on water policy issues, approving the Kansas Water Plan and making recommendations for funding and spending the State Water Plan Fund.

It is that duty to make recommendations on funding the State Water Plan Fund that brings me here today. The State Water Plan Fund was created in 1989 for the express purpose of funding the projects and programs identified in the Kansas Water Plan.

The Kansas Water Authority has consistently urged significantly increased funding for the State Water Plan Fund, to make possible the implementation of the Kansas Water Plan. You will see this request in the Kansas Water Plan, approved last August, and in the Water Authority's Annual Report to the Governor and Legislature provided to you in January of this year. After many years of underfunding, the Legislature and Governor fully funded two statutory transfers to the State Water Plan Fund in FY 2023 and we are grateful for that. However, as is reflected in the Annual Report, significantly more funding is necessary to fully implement the projects and programs identified in Water Plan.

To that end, the Kansas Water Authority met on March 3, 2023, and voted to express support for HB 2302. On behalf of the Kansas Water Authority, I urge you to greatly improve Kansas' ability to address its water needs across the state by significantly increasing funding for the State Water Plan Fund. Thank you.