



## The Kansas Groundwater Management Districts

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### Testimony before the House Committee on Ag & Natural Resources In Support of HB 2517 Sean Miller – Southwest Kansas GMD#3 Wednesday, February 1, 2012

Good morning Chairman Powell and committee members. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony on behalf of all five Groundwater Management Districts. The GMD's support the purpose of House Bill 2517 with the balloon corrections provided by the Division of Conservation as we understand they help focus the intent of the WaterTAP program without attempting to statutorily define areas that will be eligible under the program.

The Water Transition Assistance Program (WaterTAP) is a uniquely Kansas program that is structured to provide a necessary water conservation tool that can be leveraged with local, state and other program resources to permanently reduce water consumptions through a voluntary incentive based retirement of all or a portion of a water right in water short areas targeted for enhanced aquifer management.

Full voluntary water right buy-outs can be cost prohibitive as an effective standalone program to meet local groundwater management goals. However, the WaterTAP options to entertain partial water right buy down or to leverage WaterTAP resources with other conservation initiatives and programs provides a strong practical program that offers the most utility as an important part of the groundwater management tools for Kansas. The potential areas that can benefit from WaterTAP will be defined further as priority management areas mature and local management strategies develop. With your help, WaterTAP can remain an effective part of the Kansas water management program that provides leadership to local areas and by example to the other important groundwater areas of the Western United States.

In closing, the Groundwater Management Districts believe that WaterTAP is an important program and should be made permanent. As such, we ask for your support for HB 2517 with the amendments outlined by the Division of Conservation

Thank you for your time in allowing the opportunity to submit these comments on behalf of all five Groundwater Management Districts. I am happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.