

COMMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE HOUSE ENERGY AND UTILITIES COMMITTEE

IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 406, KANSAS STORAGE TANK ACT

MARCH 7, 2012

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for allowing the Kansas Petroleum Council to submit written comments in support of Senate Bill 406, an extension through July 1, 2014, of the state Underground and Aboveground Storage Tank Trust Fund.

The Council worked with petroleum marketers and the Department of Health and Environment to develop the original underground storage tank fund. The program is regarded as one of the nation's best, and should be extended because the work of cleaning up abandoned storage tanks is not complete. According to Mr. Tom Palace, executive director of the Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association of Kansas, an average of 30 facilities apply annually for assistance from the fund. KDHE has identified an estimated 1,000 orphaned storage tanks.

Extension of the trust fund will allow for a continued emphasis on protecting the environment. An added bonus is city and county economic development. Properties once considered detrimental can be transformed into other businesses once a site is certified by KDHE.

The task facing the trust fund was massive when it started, but has now become an effective tool to protect the environment and boost local economies.

The Council asks that the committee approve the legislation to ensure that the fund continue its uninterrupted operation.

Thank you for your courtesy and consideration.

Ken Peterson, executive director