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February 15th, 2018
Written Opposition Testimony on HB 2641
Before the House Committee on Water & Environment
Submitted by J. Kent Eckles, Kansas Petroleum Council

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Kent Eckles with the Kansas Petroleum Council and I appreciate the opportunity to submit written comments in opposition to HB 2641, which would prohibit operators of Class II injection wells from injecting more than 8,000 barrels per day (bpd).

The Kansas Petroleum Council is strongly opposed to this bill for several reasons:

As background, former Governor Sam Brownback created an Induced Seismicity Task Force nearly four years ago to study this relatively new phenomenon. The Task Force was made up of the Kansas Geological Society (KGS), the Kansas Corporation Commission (KCC) and the Kansas Department of Health & Environment (KDHE). Upon many months of research and study, it has been concluded that in very limited circumstances (less than ½ of 1%) of all Class II injection wells could be POTENTIALLY linked to seismic activity.

In 2015, the KCC ordered limits to injection volumes and pressures in “areas of seismic concern” in Harper & Sumner Counties to 8,000 bpd and later expanded that area into Kingman, Sedgwick & Barber Counties, limiting injection volumes to 16,000 bpd. The result of these reductions is that felt earthquakes (magnitude 2.8 or greater) have dropped by 65%! This tells us that current regulations are working. In fact, Kansas is held up as a national model to emulate when regulating potential induced seismicity, with Oklahoma, Texas and other states following our lead. As a result, those states are also seeing a reduction in felt seismic events.

The most troubling provision of this bill is that it presumes that all seismic activity in Kansas is being caused by oil and gas activities. Nothing could be further from the truth. There are seismic events in parts of Kansas where no oil and gas operations exist. There are areas in Kansas where oil and gas have operated for decades and there has been no seismic activity in those areas. Finally, most of the felt seismic events in South Central Kansas are emanating from outside the state with epicenters in Oklahoma.

The Kansas oil and gas industry is a \$2.8+ billion industry that puts tens of thousands of people to work each day and pumps hundreds of millions of dollars into the state’s economy each year, money that helps support families, fund schools, and build roads. The Kansas oil and gas industry is crucial to the Kansas economy today and will be going forward for years to come. Oil and gas is produced in 89 of Kansas’ 105 counties. Passage of this bill would severely curtail our industry’s contributions to the state.

For the aforementioned reasons, the Kansas Petroleum Council urges the Committee not pass HB 2641.

The Kansas Petroleum Council is a division of API, which represents all segments of America’s oil and natural gas industry. Its more than 650 members include large integrated companies, as well as exploration and production, refining, marketing, pipeline, and marine businesses, and service & supply firms. They provide most of the nation’s energy and are backed by a growing grassroots movement of more than 30 million Americans.

Attachment 29
HWE 2-15-18