

**To: Senate Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources, Senator Dan Kerschen, Chairman**

**From: Kent Askren, Kansas Farm Bureau**

**Date: March 20 2017**

**Re: Written Testimony on SB 194- concerning water, relating to GMDs user charges**

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Chairman Kerschen and members of the Committee, on behalf of Kansas Farm Bureau I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments today in support of SB 194. KFB is the state's largest general farm organization representing more than 40,000 farm and ranch families through our 105 county Farm Bureau associations.

KFB policy supports Groundwater Management Districts (GMD) and the role local water users have in determining their destiny. GMD's must develop programs and projects to implement their management plan and this requires adequate funding.

SB 194 proposes to raise the water user charge cap from \$1 to \$1.50 per acre foot withdrawn or allocated within the district or from \$1.50 to \$2 per acre foot if more than 50% of the groundwater is applied to land outside the district. Additionally, the bill proposes to increase the annual assessment cap from \$0.05 to \$0.10 per acre on land located within the district boundaries.

This water use charge and land assessment is based upon the GMD Boards proposed budget that district land owners and water right holders vote on at a district hearing. Our grassroots policy supports such efforts to self-manage the resource.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and we hope you will vote to pass out SB 194 favorably as introduced.