



February 17, 2020

Proponent Testimony in Support of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1614: Supporting Kansas farmers and ranchers in the Rattlesnake Creek Sub-Basin. (Written Only)

Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, February 17, 2020

Richard J. Wenstrom, Vice-President, Water Protection Association of Central Kansas (Water PACK)

Chairman Kerschen and Members of the Committee,

My name is Richard Wenstrom, and I am providing written testimony in support of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 1614 on behalf of the irrigated producers and associated business members of the Water Protection Association of Central Kansas (Water PACK). The area that our organization serves includes 500,000 acres of irrigated production in Edwards, Kiowa, Pawnee, Barton, Stafford, Pratt and portions of Reno and Rice counties in south central Kansas. Much of this area is included in the Rattlesnake Creek Sub-Basin. As a private non-profit organization, Water PACK serves as a proactive voice for irrigated agriculture by promoting water conservation and sustainability, our local community economies, incentive-based solutions rather than regulation, and individual autonomy.

Water PACK stands in support of this resolution which urges a collaborative, non-regulatory solution to the impairment of the Quivira National Wildlife Refuge in the Rattlesnake Creek Sub-Basin. We believe that a solution involving augmentation of water directly into the Rattlesnake Creek just upstream of the Refuge plus water conservation measures will not only solve the impairment, but will also preserve the fragile agricultural economy of the area for generations to come. Sound science is a huge part of this solution, and we support the efforts of the Groundwater Management District No. 5 and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to make decisions based on this.

Thank you very much for allowing this written testimony on behalf of the membership of Water PACK.