



**Before the
House Committee on Water & Environment
Testimony on HCR5008
Dennis Schwartz, Kansas Water Authority & Blue Ribbon Funding Task Force Member
February 7, 2017**

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. My name is Dennis Schwartz, and I am a member of the Kansas Water Authority and served on the Blue Ribbon Funding Task Force for Water Resource Management. I am here today on behalf of the Kansas Water Authority in support of HCR5008, a proposition to amend article 11 of the constitution of the state of Kansas concerning the state water plan fund (SWPF).

Just last month, KWA Chairman Gary Harshberger appeared before this committee to present the KWA's Annual Report to the Governor and Legislature. He discussed the KWA's endorsement of the recommendations of the Task Force as it concerns additional revenues to the SWPF. I would like to reiterate some of those comments here today.

HCR5008 addresses the second and third recommendations of the Task Force that "One-tenth of one percent of the existing statewide sales tax be dedicated to funding Vision implementation," and "It is preferable that the dedication of the one-tenth of one percent sales tax be protected for this purpose by constitutional amendment and subject to referendum every 10 years." The KWA voted to support these recommendations in December, 2016.

Since the completion of the Vision, the KWA has prioritized projects for additional funding. These projects are statewide – from irrigation adaptation through Water Technology Farms and exploration of reuse options serving those in the west, and reservoir sustainability and BMP implementation in the east. The need for additional investment in our state's water future is growing each year, and should be addressed as quickly as possible. The Task Force agreed with the need for more than \$50 million in additional funding, and looked at many different options for funding, deciding a state-wide sales tax contribution was appropriate.

As Chairman Harshberger stated last month, the KWA stands ready to implement the additional funding in order to meet the needs across the state for a sustainable water supply for future Kansans. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today, and will stand for questions at the appropriate time.