



**Before the
House Committee on Water and Environment
Testimony on HB 2032
Tracy Streeter, Director, Kansas Water Office
January 31, 2017**

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear this morning regarding House Bill 2032. My name is Tracy Streeter, and I am the Director of the Kansas Water Office. I am here on behalf of the Kansas Water Authority to provide comments relative to HB 2032, which proposes to increase existing fees associated with the State Water Plan Fund (SWPF).

The Kansas Water Authority (KWA) is responsible for advising the Governor, Legislature and Director of the Kansas Water Office on water policy issues and for approving the *Kansas Water Plan*, federal contracts, administration regulations and legislation proposed by the KWO. The KWA provides the leadership to ensure that water policies and programs address the needs of all Kansans.

Gary Harshberger, Chairman of the KWA appeared before the committee last week to discuss the work of the KWA, and the process it would go through to distribute any additional funds. He made apparent there is a need for increased funding to adequately manage the state's water resource in the future. The KWA did not take official action in support or opposition to HB 2032. However, the KWA took official action in December to support the findings Blue Ribbon Funding Task Force (BRFTF) for Water Resource Management as it relates to additional funding. As he stated last week, those are as follows:

- Existing fees into the SWPF be maintained at current levels,
- One-tenth of one percent of the existing statewide sales tax be dedicated to funding Vision implementation,
- 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,
- A review of all existing user fees by the legislature five years after successful collection of the state sales tax, to continue every 5 years thereafter,
- That the State General Fund & Economic Development Initiatives Fund statutory demand transfers be provided to the SWPF by the legislature during the 2017 session for the FY2018 and 2019 budgets, or until the proposed sales tax revenue is successfully collected, and
- The Legislature and the KWA look at the statute relative to the makeup of the KWA, and seek to include demographic and user fee participation as guidelines for representation and appointments.

During the course of discussion, the BRFTF did evaluate and consider increases to existing and new fees to provide additional revenue to implement the Governor's Water Vision. However, the Task Force did not include changes to existing or new fees as part of its' recommendations stated above.

The KWA appreciates the work of the House Water and Environment Committee as it considers measures to address our state's future water resource concerns. I will be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.