



*Since 1894*

To: Senate Agriculture Committee  
Senator Mark Taddiken, Chair

From: Mike Beam, Kansas Livestock Association

Re: **Testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 272, a bill amending the water use flex account statute.**

Date: January 18, 2012

*The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA), formed in 1894, is a trade association representing over 5,000 members on legislative and regulatory issues. KLA members are involved in many aspects of the livestock industry, including seed stock, cow-calf and stocker production, cattle feeding, dairy production, grazing land management and diversified farming operations.*

Thank you Mr. Chairman, for promptly scheduling a hearing on SB 272. The Kansas Livestock Association is supportive of this legislation and urges the committee to take swift action on the bill so it may be one of the first bills passed this session.

Our support of SB 272 focuses on Section 2, which makes several amendments to the existing "flex account" provision in Kansas water appropriation law. For several years, KLA members have advocated a policy that encourages the Division of Water Resources to authorize a multi-year allocation system for water permits. While current law allows for a water use flex account, the existing conservation requirements have inhibited demand and participation in the program.

We applaud the Division of Water Resources, the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Kansas Water Authority and the Kansas Water Office's collaborative effort to explore changes to the law that should attract more participation by water users. Because of the extreme heat and drought conditions during the 2011 growing season, making these changes during the 2012 session will be timely and welcomed by many water right owners in this state.

We also commend the Chief Engineer for structuring these enhancements and modifications so that water users who entered into two-year term permits in 2011 may roll into the new multi-year flex account as outlined in SB 272. Timely and swift action by the 2012 Kansas Legislature will help many water users this spring as they plan for the 2012 crop year.

KLA respectfully urges the Senate Agriculture Committee to pass SB 272 to the full Senate.