

To: House Water and Environment Committee, Rep. Tom Sloan, Chairperson
From: John Donley, Kansas Corn Growers Association
Date: February 13, 2018
Re: HB 2726- establishing the non-corn irrigation grant program

Good morning Chairman Sloan and members of the committee, Thank you for the opportunity to present today on behalf of the Kansas Corn Growers Association (KCGA) opposing HB 2726. KCGA is the association representing the interests of corn growers in the state of Kansas.

KCGA stands strongly opposed to HB 2726 today for many reasons. KCGA policy supports planting decisions remaining in the hands of growers; further, KCGA opposes the development of policy or regulation that would discourage planting of one crop in favor of another. HB 2726 flies in the face of this policy based on the title of the grant program alone.

If the state decides to make the policy decision to provide bonding authority for grants related to irrigated crops, such grants should include all crops, including corn. By increasing water use efficiency of all crops, we are more likely to have a positive result from such grants and research. Specifically, conducting research on corn could potentially lead to more water conservation for the state than research conducted on other crops since corn is a significant portion of the irrigated crop mix today.

Once again, I am here today in strong opposition to HB 2726. KCGA is disappointed that the discussion in this committee over the past two sessions has simply digressed into a situation where a single commodity or water use type has been targeted. The conversation would be much healthier if the state of Kansas would simply hold up their end of the agreement that is in current law. The state should fully fund the existing demand transfers in law as well as provide funding for the past appropriations that were not made to the state water plan. Furthermore, the legislature should allow the Kansas Water Office and the Kansas Water Authority to do the job that they were statutorily created to do. This committee has been searching for something to support and pass to help conserve water in the state of Kansas. As most stakeholders have testified over the past two years, the answer is simple...support current law.