



STATE ASSOCIATION
OF KANSAS WATERSHEDS



Neutral Testimony on HB 2188

Senate Committee on Ethics, Elections, and Local Government

March 21, 2019

Madam Chair Bowers and members of the Senate Committee on Ethics, Elections, and Local Government:

My name is Herb Graves, Executive Director of the State Association of Kansas Watersheds. SAKW takes a neutral stance on HB 2188.

The City of Atchison has maintained the dams in the White Clay-Brewery-Whiskey Creeks Watershed District No. 26 ever since they were constructed in the early to mid-1960's. HB 2188 just gives the City complete control and ownership of the dams for both regulatory as well as administrative purposes. SAKW supports this action completely. SAKW expects the City to continue the fine work of maintenance of their dams required by the State of Kansas on in to the future.

SAKW is concerned though with the method used for dissolving the White Clay-Brewery-Whiskey Creeks WD No. 26. The Watershed District Act contains specific guidance and regulations that must be met before a district can dissolve. In the opinion of SAKW, HB 2188 should have merely amended KSA 24-1201 by adding a third methodology for dissolving a watershed district. The methodology being that what is proposed by HB2188. The remainder of HB 2188 could have then addressed the tax lid exemption provisions as introduced.

The City of Atchison and their 25 watershed district dams with all but three being within the city limits is unique in Kansas. The benefits to the City are unquestionably paying dividends against the large federal investment to install the dams. SAKW wishes the City the best as another chapter in the history of Watershed District No. 26 is unfolded.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment on HB 2188. I would be glad to take any questions from the committee at the appropriate time.

**Herbert R. Graves Jr.
SAKW Executive Director**