

MINUTES OF THE SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mark Taddiken at 8:30 a.m. on February 25, 2008 in Room 423-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Terry Bruce - excused  
Derek Schmidt- excused

Committee staff present:

Raney Gilliland, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Emalene Correll, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Jason Thompson, Office of Revisor of Statutes  
Matt Todd, Office of Revisor of Statutes  
Judy Seitz, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Kenneth Nelson, Superintendent, Kansas Bostwick Irrigation District #2  
Greg Shipe, Davenport Orchards, Vineyards and Winery  
John Pendelton, Farmer  
Marc Neis, Farmer  
Burke Griggs, Stevens and Brand, L.L.P.  
Elmer Ronnebaum, Executive Director, Kansas Rural Water Association  
Darci Meese, Water One

Others attending:

See attached list.

Vice Chairman Pine opened the hearing on **SB 558--Irrigation districts; conducting elections by mail.** Chairman Taddiken introduced this bill at a request from a constituent. He said this would allow an irrigation district to conduct the election for the board of directors by mail as an option with the exception of the first election.

Kenneth Nelson, Superintendent, Kansas Bostwick Irrigation District #2, testified in favor of **SB 558** (Attachment 1). He believes the option of a mail in ballot would give all qualified voters easy access to the democratic process and increase voting.

Mr. Nelson took questions from the Committee.

There were no opponents.

Senator Lee moved SB 558 be passed favorably, seconded by Senator Francisco. Motion carried. SB 558 will be reported as passed favorably.

Chairman Taddiken opened the hearing on **SB 559--Water supply and distribution districts, acquisition of grounds.**

Jason Thompson, Office of Revisor of Statutes, reviewed **SB 559.** One of the changes would remove the power to use eminent domain outside the boundaries of the district. K.S.A.19-3502 applies to territory located in Miami, Franklin, Johnson and Wyandotte counties.

Mr. Thompson answered questions from the Committee.

Vice Chairman Pine said he was responsible for this bill being put on the docket because he is a farmer in this area and this issue is of interest to him. There were other constituents who brought this matter to him and it was not his idea, but he thinks it is a good idea.