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**Testimony as a Proponent Party of HB2665**  
**Provided To**  
**The House Water and Environment Committee**  
**From the Southwest Kansas Groundwater Management District No. 3 (GMD3)**  
**February 13, 2018**

Chairman Sloan and members of the committee, I am Mark Rude, Executive Director of GMD3 here to provide supporting testimony for HB 2665, but with several practical concerns for organizing priority commission work, the untouchable policy for local groundwater management, and the overly limiting qualifications for employment as a commissioner.

Independent legal review and study is overdue for state laws and their interplay to achieve better management of water lost to other states and other priorities for improving renewable water supply as identified by GMD3 and the Kansas Water Vision. Strategic study and supply development are now on the state business table in the elements of the Water Vision implementation. With depleting groundwater supplies, GMD3 is compelled to be active partner in this work. Attached to this testimony is a January 22, 2018 email letter from GMD3 to the Water Office and Water Authority on Vision action priorities for renewable supplies, including study items of the commission project of HB 2665.

The open list of laws for the HB 2665 commission may be too massive for one commission enterprise without some focus on priorities of the most used laws, such as the Water Appropriation Act. We recommend a phased local and state budget friendly approach be included in this important evaluation and recommendation process for Kansas.

We believe the right to local control in the GMD Act is basic Kansas water policy and should be considered untouchable by such a commission. Not only does GMD3 strive to act on a shared commitment to develop and conserve water supply to grow the social, economic and natural resources well-being for current and future generations in the public interest, it does so as the groundwater management entity of the legislature that is self-organized and self-funded to self-determine the destiny of the district water use and management. The right to do so was promised and accepted by Kansans in the formation of GMD3 and affirmed in the Water Vision as the best policy model. The HB2665 commissioning process should only provide recommendations that strengthen this right in the public interest. Attached to this testimony is a letter of the basic history and the role of GMD3 responding to a joint request by state officials to not act prematurely to develop additional sources of water; the outcome of which likely influenced the drafting of HB2665.

Finally, the overly restricted qualifications in the bill for employment as a commissioner may deny Kansas the benefits of outside assistance in providing impartial expert legal review and opinion. Thank you for allowing GMD3 to participate in today's hearing. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.