

To: House Committee on Water and Environment, Rep. Tom Sloan, Chairman

From: Kent Askren, Kansas Farm Bureau

Date: February 13, 2018

Re: KFB written testimony in support of HB 2732- An act concerning water

Chairman Sloan and members of the Committee on behalf of Kansas Farm Bureau I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 2732. KFB is the state's largest general farm organization representing more than 30,000 farm and ranch families through our 105 county Farm Bureau associations.

KFB policy is generally supportive of programs to create water banks that are voluntary, provide financial incentives to landowners, contain a strong conservation component and keep banked water within the bank boundaries. We have had very little time though to fully study HB 2732 or to consult with other stakeholders.

The idea of authorizing the Division of Conservation to operate a water bank raises some questions that might be best answered by the Central Kansas Water Bank, the only functional water bank in Kansas. They have the experience to provide insight into the viability of operating both privately and publicly administered water banks. Are there costs of operating a bank that may not be apparent or would be more efficiently run by private not-for-profit entities?

Once again, we support water banking but want to ensure the concepts of HB 2732 have been fully deliberated by all affected parties before moving too quickly with legislative authority to advance agency administered water banks.

Thanks again for the opportunity to provide written comments on HB 2732.