



February 4, 2021
Before the House Agriculture Committee
Support testimony on HB 2155

Oral Testimony of Michael Gillaspie
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Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Michael Gillaspie and I work for ONEOK, as the director of government relations in Kansas. ONEOK owns and operates one of the nation's premier natural gas and natural gas liquids (NGL) systems, connecting NGL supply in the Mid-Continent, Permian and Rocky Mountain regions with key market centers and is a leader in the gathering, processing, storage and transportation of natural gas in the U.S. ONEOK has operations in 18 states, including substantial facilities and pipelines throughout the state of Kansas. ONEOK appreciates the opportunity to provide comments in support of the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) proposal to amend the existing Water Supply and Sewage Act (K.S.A. 65-171).

ONEOK's operating commitment to environmental compliance sets the expectation that the company operates responsibly and employs best management practices that help mitigate the potential impacts of our operations on the environment. ONEOK strives to comply with all requirements in the state of Kansas, including those associated with the statutes and regulations related to release reporting. Under current KDHE regulations and guidance, this includes the reporting of releases, regardless of quantity, material, or potential threat to health or the environment. ONEOK agrees with KDHE's stated intent to improve the Act and generally supports the proposed amendments to the Act.

ONEOK agrees with the KDHE's position that the agency is responsible for the protection of human health and the environment from releases of hazardous substances, and other pollutants to the surface or subsurface in the State of Kansas. That includes establishing rules and regulations necessary to respond to and report releases, including establishing minimum reportable quantities. It is important to provide consistent and clear instruction to regulated entities regarding the reporting of releases in the state of Kansas.

We recognize that the current requirement to report all releases, regardless of quantity, is unnecessary. Small volume releases are typically addressed quickly by ONEOK and do not warrant reporting and follow-up investigations by the agency. As KDHE states, the proposed amendments to the Act are necessary to facilitate regulatory action to establish more appropriate reporting requirements for releases. We support this proposed legislative action.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee on this issue contained in HB 2155. I will be happy to answer questions or provide clarification at the appropriate time.