

**NORTHWEST KANSAS GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT NO. 4**

**Shannon Kenyon, Executive Director/Manager**

**TESTIMONY SUPPORTING HB 2279**

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Groundwater Management Districts were locally formed by the public to address areas within a distinct boundary with a groundwater decline problem. Groundwater Management Districts have the responsibility to manage the water within their district by a board of directors. The Northwest Kansas Groundwater Management District #4 (GMD 4) is in support to HB 2279. GMD 4 strongly supports local efforts to extend the life of the High Plains Ogallala Aquifer for current and future generations in Northwest Kansas. This bill supports that need for local control and involvement. GMD 4 took action to extend the life of the aquifer through two Local Enhanced Management Areas (LEMAs) that have proven to be successful in reducing declines. These actions allow local control in managing water level declines and the destiny of the communities that depend on the High Plains Ogallala Aquifer.

This bill requires GMDs to submit annual financial reports. This is extremely positive in that the programs within GMD 4 will be reviewed by legislators annually and for them to be informed on our importance to our local community. Currently, GMD 4 generates an annual financial report and submits this to an auditor. This bill requires them to be submitted to legislative committees for review and provides GMDs the opportunity to highlight the conservation efforts in our respective districts.

The requirement of GMDs to identify areas of concern, conduct public education, and create an action plan is exactly how GMD 4 has conducted the development of all past and present LEMAs within our district. This plan has become a part of our management program as well. Through this process, the LEMAs have proven to be a successful tool in extending the usable life of the aquifer and increasing the economic viability at the local level. I am excited to share that process with current and future committees.