

Rep. Sloan Participates in Governor's Ogallala Aquifer Summit

Rep. Tom Sloan (R, Lawrence) participated in Governor Brownback's Ogallala Aquifer Summit. The Ogallala Aquifer is the underground water supply for the western one third of Kansas with the water used to irrigate crops, sustain town and city residents, and serve industrial users like the dairy herds and ethanol plants. The Aquifer's water saturation levels range from over 250 years supply at current use levels to areas that already are below minimum thresholds to meet legal authorized uses.

"While most of my work is to sustain the health and capacity of eastern Kansas' surface water lakes, we are all Kansans and a water crisis in one part of the state has consequences for all of us," said Sloan. "Understanding the needs and concerns of western Kansans and communicating the needs and concerns of eastern Kansans will hopefully result in a more pro-active state-wide water policy."

Rep. Sloan was the only state legislator from eastern Kansas to participate in the Ogallala Summit and was recognized by Governor Brownback for that commitment to responsible water policy development for all Kansans. The Ogallala Aquifer ranges from over 300 feet thick (that is the porous rock containing water) to less than 50 feet thick. In most locations, the Aquifer is in decline with annual withdrawals far exceeding the annual recharge, especially under current drought conditions.

Sloan Chairs the Vision 2020 Committee and is a member of the Energy & Utilities, Local Government, Agriculture & Natural Resources Budget Committees, and the Joint Committee on Energy & the Environment. He also is Vice Chairman of the Council of State Governments' Environment Task Force.

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