ENGROSSED HOUSE
BILL NO. 1108

By: Turner of the House

and

Shurden of the Senate

(water and water rights - amending 82 O.S., Section 1324.16 - water districts - training workshops - emergency)

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 82 O.S. 2001, Section 1324.16, is amended to read as follows:

Section 1324.16 A. Except as otherwise provided by law:

1. The term of office of every member elected to an original water district board shall be until the date of the annual meeting of the participating members of either the first, second or third year following the year of the incorporation of the district and until their successors are elected and have qualified, and as nearly as possible the terms of an equal number of directors on any such board shall expire on each of said dates;

2. At the annual meeting of each year after the year of the election of the original board members, elections shall be held to elect directors to fill any position on the board, the term of office of which has expired, and any director so elected shall hold office for a term of three (3) years and until his or her successor is elected and has qualified; and

3. For the purpose of election of board members and for such other purposes as the bylaws may prescribe, annual meetings of participating members shall be held by each district each year following the year of incorporation of such district. The board of

directors shall cause notice of the time and place of each annual meeting and the purpose thereof to be given to each of its participating members. Each participating member shall be entitled to a single vote, regardless of the number of benefit units to which the member has subscribed.

B. 1. A requirement for qualification to serve as a board member for a rural water district or a nonprofit rural water corporation shall be a written pledge that upon election such board member shall attend a minimum of six (6) hours of workshop training to be offered periodically on a regional basis within twelve (12) months following election of such board member, and to be organized by the Oklahoma Water Resources Board in cooperation with the Oklahoma Rural Water Association with the purpose of study and instruction in areas of district financing, law, and the ethics, duties and responsibilities of district board members. Beginning July 1, 2001, all new and existing board members shall be required to obtain continuing education by attending a minimum of six (6) hours of workshop training every three (3) years.

2. The district or corporation shall reimburse all reasonable expenses incurred by any board member for attending such training workshop.

3. To avoid members having to interfere with their jobs or employment, such training sessions may be divided into three-hour segments, and insofar as possible be scheduled for evening sessions. Technology center school facilities, college facilities or other public facilities may be utilized in all parts of the state for convenience of the members. Such workshops must be offered within seventy-five (75) miles of the members' residences.

<u>4. If a board member has attended the same or substantially similar training workshops as those offered and required pursuant to paragraph 1 of this subsection, in another capacity or a purpose other than to comply with the provisions of this subsection, such</u>

training workshop attendance may be counted towards compliance with or substituted for the requirements of the provisions of this subsection.

C. Should any pledging board member fail to attend the workshop training as required in subsection B of this section, ~~he or she~~ the board member shall be deemed ineligible to serve as a board member commencing at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the board following the twelve-month period. The remaining board members shall select from the membership, as provided by the district or corporation bylaws, another qualified member to fill the vacancy and that person shall pledge to attend the workshop training provided for in this section. The appointed member shall only serve until the next regularly scheduled election of board members and an election shall be held to fill the unexpired term of the vacated position.

D. Upon the election of a board member, the provisions of Sections 481 through 487 of Title 21 of the Oklahoma Statutes relating to nepotism shall not prohibit any employee already in the service of the district from continuing in such service or from promotion therein. Provided, however, the board member related to the employee shall excuse himself from the board meeting during any discussion of or action taken on any matter that could affect the employment or compensation for employment of such employee.

SECTION 2. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

Passed the House of Representatives the 13th day of February, 2003.

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Presiding Officer of the House of Representatives

Passed the Senate the ____ day of _____, 2003.

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Presiding Officer of the Senate