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Written Testimony for Kansas Joint Legislative Transportation Vision Task Force Regional Meeting
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Background

- I grew up in rural Clark County, Kansas and earned a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Kansas State University.
- I have worked for Kirkham Michael for about 4 years as an Engineer in Training, Project Engineer, and Project Manager.
- I currently serve as the County Engineer for Clark County and Lincoln County.
- Kirkham Michael's active Kansas client list includes 42 counties, 17 cities, and KDOT, primarily west of Salina. Our transportation projects include City streets, County roads, state highways, bridges, drainage, sidewalks, multi-use trails, and airports.

There are numerous state funded transportation programs administered by KDOT that have been vital to helping our clients manage their transportation systems, meet the needs of new business developments in their areas, and to improving safety and quality of life for their citizens.

Here is a recap of these programs:

1. State Revolving Fund (loan): low interest rates, almost no cost to obtain compared to a bond
 - a. Program was very popular with both counties and cities
 - b. KDOT had placed a halt on revolving loans several years ago because all the money had been loaned
 - c. Program is still on hold
 - d. Funding this program would greatly benefit local governments
2. KDOT Economic Development Program
 - a. Program funding can be used to build new roads, pave gravel roads, or make geometric improvements for new or expanding businesses
 - b. This program has been popular with cities and counties to build or improve transportation infrastructure to support new or expanding business
 - c. KDOT has advised that funding for this program is used up
 - d. Funding this program would greatly benefit local governments
3. Special City/County Highway Fund
 - a. Distribution of motor fuels taxes
 - b. Vital for local governments towards transportation system upkeep
4. Federal Fund Exchange: allows counties and cities to sell their allocated federal funds for state dollars
 - a. Exempts local government agency from stringent Federal regulations in project design
 - b. Utilized by many local governments
 - c. Exchange rate had been reduced to 75%, but restored to 90% by Gov. Colyer
 - d. Maintaining the 90% exchange rate greatly benefits local governments
5. Kansas Local Bridge Improvement Program (KLBIP)
 - a. One-time program introduced in 2014
 - b. Provided up to 90% funds to replace a deficient bridge, up to \$120,000



- c. Led to replacement of 77 deficient bridges, removal of 31 others
 - d. 108 total deficient bridges were removed from the state inventory
 - e. County agencies desperately desire this program to continue
 - f. KDOT has said they would do it again if they had the funds
6. Access Management Program
 - a. Provides funds for traffic studies and improvements at connections to state highways
 - b. Improvements could be for safety, traffic flow efficiency, or economic development
 - c. Funding this program would greatly benefit local governments
 7. Airport Improvement Fund
 - a. Has benefited numerous Kansas airports with runway, taxiway, apron, lighting, pavement marking, planning, and other projects
 - b. In 2018, more than \$42 million in projects was submitted to KDOT (source: KDOT news release)
 - c. KDOT had funds to award \$3 million (source: KDOT news release)
 - d. Increased funding would greatly benefit local governments
 8. City Connecting Link Improvement Program (CCLIP)
 - a. Provides funds to cities for maintaining or improving state highways which travel through cities
 - b. In 2018, KDOT received 69 applications for more than \$38 million (source: KDOT news release)
 - c. KDOT had funds to award 27 projects worth \$13.7 million (source: KDOT news release)
 - d. Local governments need more funds to keep up with their needs

For local governments, the current funding methods will not support the rural road network. There are approximately 115,000 miles of County and township roads as compared to 10,000 miles in the state system. With the tax lid, there is no available increase in funding. Property tax is inherently an unfair way to fund roads. Agriculture land pays only about 20% of rural road maintenance costs. About 70% of property tax is used to fund rural roads that originates from City property.

Additionally, there are approximately 19,313 bridges in Kansas. About 1,883 of these are structurally deficient and 1,072 are functionally obsolete. Approximately 6,660 bridges have load restrictions, and about 4,504 are over 75 years old. The average bridge age is 50 years old. Due to the high costs of bridge construction, counties are not replacing bridges at a sustainable rate and average just 115 bridge replacements statewide per year. At the current replacement rate, the counties will be faced with closing half their bridges in the next 50 years. Local road bridges are vital to transporting agricultural products, mail, students, equipment, etc. Bridge funding is desperately needed.

In conclusion, I greatly hope that you will support Kansas infrastructure. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tanner B. Yost".