



**Testimony in Support of SB359**  
**John Federico: Federico // Duerst Consulting Group**  
**House Transportation Committee**  
**March 6, 2024**

Chairman Francis & Members of the House Transportation Committee:

My name is John Federico, of the Federico // Duerst Consulting Group, here on behalf of the Sporting Kansas City soccer organization (SKC). We are in full support of SB359 and the charity it will support. You will hear more details of the Victory Project from Ms. Clark and we will happily share any additional information you might need after the committee concludes.

As you are aware, Sporting KC is Kansas' only professional sports team. The team came into existence as one of the original 10 members of the newly-formed MLS professional soccer league in 1995. At the time, the team was owned by the Lamar Hunt family, and based in Missouri playing under the name of the KC Wiz.

In an effort to keep professional soccer in the region, the team was purchased in 2006 by an investor group that included Kansas' Cliff Illig, among others. In 2008, the team moved their matches from Arrowhead Stadium in Missouri to the Community America Ballpark in Kansas City, KS. That simple decision, picking Kansas over Missouri, led the way to other investments in the sport of soccer and has earned Kansas recognition as the Soccer Capital of America.

Other notable milestones surrounding the soccer club we now know as Sporting Kansas City, include a name change in 2010, and the construction of a \$180M soccer-specific venue called *Children's Mercy Park* (CMP) located in the Legends complex of Kansas City, KS. To this day, with your help in maintaining its status as a state-of-the-art facility... CMP continually hosts premiere professional, collegiate, and international soccer matches that provide global exposure for Kansas and attract people, and their dollars, from all over the world to our humble state.

In 2017, just 2 miles away from CMP, construction was completed on a second world-class soccer facility in Kansas, the *Compass Minerals National Performance Center*. This facility is used as a training center for both SKC, and the United States Soccer Federation, which governs all aspects of national, professional and youth soccer in the country. This facility alone generates over 10,000 hotel room stays each year, and over 1.3M visitors to its youth soccer fields. Combined, the two account for over \$250M in positive economic impact for Kansas annually.

It is with that as a foundation that we are both fortunate and grateful that SKC chose Kansas as its home, and it is why we respectfully ask that you give consideration to advancing SB359 from your Committee and allow fans from across the state to show their support of both the SKC soccer club and the Victory Project.