



Testimony of the Kansas Association of Counties  
on HB 2775  
March 15, 2018

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of HB 2775. We believe the bill outlines the first step in analyzing the transportation needs of the state and local governments. The task force and its study requirements will create an informed decision based on past programs, current trends, funding needs, and all the items outlined in the task force study.

Counties play a significant role in transportation. We are responsible for over 100,000 miles of road in this state, which is 80% of roads in Kansas. We are also responsible for over 19,000 bridges, which roughly equates to three-quarters of the bridges in Kansas. While the state highway system represents the major routes within the state, almost all trips begin and end on a local street or road. The feeder routes of county roads and city streets are an essential element of the transportation system of the state and need to be considered in any analysis of our transportation system. Because counties play such a significant role in transportation, we prefer SB 325's inclusion of *two* county officials on the task force. Two county representatives appointed by KAC would help ensure both an urban and rural perspective on transportation issues.

KAC appreciates the use of subcommittees in HB 2775 as we believe this will allow more input from the public, including local government officials and subject-matter experts in transportation.

Although not mentioned in the bill, we hope that public safety will be considered in the study. There have been reports that traffic accident fatalities are increasing in Kansas. At the local level, we see outdated roads, many of which do not have shoulders and other modern safety details. Without modernization of these roads they are hazardous to drive. It is our belief that the citizens of Kansas want our road system to become safer every year, and priority should be given to improvement of roads with safety issues in mind.

Lastly, KAC hopes any future transportation program will recognize the long and positive relationship between counties and KDOT and continue that partnership into the future. A good example of the partnership between the state and locals is the Federal Funds Exchange Program, which was started in FY 2011 and allows local government to receive federal funds through KDOT with a state match.

We support the bill and ask the committee to recommend it favorably. Thank you for your time.

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