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VIC MILLER
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**Testimony before House Federal and State Affairs
February 19, 2020
House Bill 2385**

Chairman Barker, Vice-Chair Awerkamp, Ranking Member L. Ruiz and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of HB 2385 to name the Polka the official state dance of Kansas.

I understand we all have a mountain of important work to do and appreciate that this issue does not rise to the level of importance for some to merit today's discussion. I get that and, being mindful of that, I will be brief. I will say, however, that for many, many Kansans and for varying reasons, this issue is important. So, I say again, on behalf of all those Kansans, thank you for your time and attention in considering making Kansas the 33rd state to have an official state dance.

My interest in this matter arises on a number of levels but is due in large part to my own heritage. While not so recognizable from my surname, I am very much a Bohemian and all evidence points to Bohemia as the place of origin of the polka. Since the dance's origin, however, its popularity has spread throughout the world.

Why a state dance? Why not. Does anyone not feel better when they have had the opportunity to partake in their favorite style of dancing? There is a reason most celebrations include dancing as an integral part of those celebrations. Dancing is therapeutic. It makes us feel good. It makes us happy.

Why have we adopted any of the many symbols that say we are Kansans? The answer lies within the question. We do so because we are proud to be Kansans and we want to paint a portrait of who and what we are and what Kansas is.

Why the polka? The remaining conferees will speak to that question and will do so far more eloquently than I ever could. But whether you are nine or 90 you can't help but feel better after a good polka.

Thank you again and I would ask that you please take the opportunity to review the written only testimony submitted today. I am happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.