

Kansas Press Association, Inc.

Dedicated to serving and advancing the interests of Kansas newspapers

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Feb. 24, 2021

To: Sen. Elaine Bowers, chair, and members of the Senate Transparency and Ethics Committee

From: Emily Bradbury, executive director, Kansas Press Association

Re: Support for Substitute for HB 2049

Sen. Bowers and members of the Committee:

I am Emily Bradbury, executive director of the Kansas Press Association.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on our association's support for Substitute for HB 2049. I represent the 200 daily, nondaily and college newspapers that are members of the KPA.

We opposed this bill on the House side as originally written because it gave special treatment to a state agency while denying the same benefits to those of us who have fought for decades for fairness in the way the costs associated with Kansas Open Records Act requests are handled by state and local agencies of government.

However, amendments approved on the House side to remove the KORA exception and keep the prohibition on fees in another area of the law, we believe, are adequate for KPA to remove its objections.

We understand the Legislative Post Audit Division's fear that charges for public records the division needs to do its job might get out of hand. Our efforts to amend KSA 45-219 through the years have been designed to prohibit price gouging by governmental units, especially when those requests are in the public interest.

Our efforts so far have been unsuccessful, so we certainly couldn't stand by while a state agency tried to insert a special interest exception for itself into KORA.

We support Substitute for HB 2019. Since it is similar to Senate Bill 17, we ask that you reject SB 17 in favor of the amended language in HB 2019.

Thank you.

Emily Bradbury, Executive Director

ebradbury@kspress.com

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4021 SW 10th St, #351

Topeka, KS 66604

(Cell phone) 785-213-8524