

March 15, 2022

To: Senate Committee on Transportation

From: Jackson Swearer, Hutchinson Resident / Raising the Flag Committee Member

Re: HB 2633

Chairman and Members of the Committee:

As a Hutchinson native, and a member of the committee responsible for the selection of our flag, I am biased, but I believe Hutchinson is fortunate to have a great flag! If you visit our Downtown, you will see it everywhere, from murals on buildings to stickers on storefronts, from t-shirts to coffee mugs. A great municipal flag can be an important source of community pride. It would mean a lot to many residents of Hutchinson if they could also proudly display our municipal flag on their license plate, and for that reason I am writing today as a proponent for HB 2633.

The Hutchinson flag is a great example of the sort of civic engagement I believe Kansans ought to strive toward. In the winter of 2017, the Raising the Flag committee was formed in Hutchinson. At the time, the City of Hutchinson had a logo and a seal, but no official flag. I was a part of a group of residents who wanted to see that change. We started out with research. We learned about principles of good flag design, and we learned about how other communities had gone about choosing a flag for their city. Armed with knowledge of what worked, and even more knowledge of what didn't work, the Committee set out to find a great flag design and get it adopted as the official Hutchinson flag.

Throughout 2018, the Raising the Flag committee worked hard toward our goal. We knew that getting input from other residents would be important, to make sure that the eventual flag design would resonate with what they felt represented their community. We held meetings all over Hutchinson. We learned what symbols and colors people identified with, and what things they would not want to see on the flag. After compiling input from a diverse group of residents, the committee solicited entries into a design contest. A panel of artists, designers and non-artists selected a winning design based on the guidelines of good flag design laid out by the committee and the input from residents. The design was met with resounding support throughout the community. The test run of flags sold out almost immediately, and the design quickly found its way onto merchandise all over town. Following the official adoption of the flag in December of 2018, the design has continued to be incorporated throughout the City, demonstrating its important role as a source of community pride.

As a member of the Hutchinson community and the Raising the Flag committee, I wholeheartedly support the creation of a license plate with the Hutchinson Flag, with the proceeds going to the Hutchinson Recreation Commission Foundation, an organization who also plays a key role in promoting community pride in Hutchinson.

Sincerely,

Jackson Swearer
Hutchinson Resident / Raising the Flag Committee Member