



**House Committee on Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications
Testimony in Support of House Bill 2591- KCC Open Meetings Act Changes
Presented by Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs, Kansas Chamber**

Tuesday, February 13, 2024

Mister Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Kansas Chamber. The Kansas Chamber represents small, medium and large businesses of all industry segments across the state. We appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2591, which modifies the Kansas Open Meetings Act (KOMA) to exempt the Kansas Corporation Commission specific to proceedings before the commission.

HB 2591 eliminates a problem facing the corporation commission in that commissioners are not able to communicate directly with each other under current law, leaving much of the influence on recommendations to staff.

Just like quasi-judicial functions are exempt from KOMA, so would KCC related to proceedings if HB 2591 was adopted. Protections are also added in HB 2591 by clarifying no party or their counsel may partake in ex parte communications with any commissioner.

In closing, we respectfully ask the committee to support House Bill 2591 to help the corporation commission improve its ability to make sound and thoughtful decisions on proceedings impacting Kansans.