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To: Senate Local Government Committee
From: Mark Tomb, VP of Governmental Affairs
Date: March 21, 2023

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 2083

On behalf of the Kansas Association of REALTORS® (KAR), thank you for the opportunity to express support for HB 2083, which would enact the Kansas Vacant Property Act.

The Kansas Association of REALTORS® represents over 11,000 members involved in residential, agricultural and commercial real estate and has advocated on behalf of the state's property owners for more than 100 years. REALTORS® serve an important role in the state's economy and are dedicated to working with our elected officials to create better communities by supporting economic development, a high quality of life and providing affordable housing opportunities while protecting the rights of private property owners.

REALTORS® believe in the fundamental right of all private property owners working through local governments to determine the highest and best use of their land. Further, we maintain that every citizen should have the right to acquire real property with the confidence and certainty that the value of such property will not be unreasonably diminished by governmental action at any level without just compensation or the owner's express consent. Municipalities currently have the power to abate nuisances and if there is a problem with a property that is where local governments should focus their attention. Simply having a fee for vacant properties is not justified and clearly interferes with a property owner's ability to use their property as they see fit.

REALTORS® believe that the private ownership of real property is the foundation of our nation's free enterprise system and we adamantly oppose any governmental actions that discourage or diminish the ability and capacity of Kansas citizens to own private property. Homeownership is the cornerstone of the American Dream and deserves a preferred place in our system of values as it contributes to community responsibility; business, civic, and economic stability; family security and quality of life.

Following consideration in the House Local Government Committee, several proponents and opponents carefully crafted a compromise regarding this legislation. Cities preserve the ability to identify problematic vacant properties but will be unable to charge a fee simply because a property is vacant. In closing, the Kansas Association of REALTORS® respectfully request the Senate Local Government Committee act favorably on HB 2083. Thank you for the opportunity to provide the committee with comments.