

I, Ken Matney, a citizen and business owner of Chanute Kansas, would like Senate Bill No. 329 adopted. My business address is 5 East Main Street, Chanute, Kansas and is surrounded by historical-like buildings. It is within 500 feet of property on the National Register, such as, The Tioga Hotel. Being in an Environ Zone does not impact my business or the look of my business because I want the area to preserve its history and continue rehabbing buildings to maintain the historical look of downtown. I truly believe that the best economic development is to preserve buildings that utilize the existing infrastructure. We are a Main Street community and as the President of the Board of Directors I can share that we have a great desire to preserve our historical buildings and eventually become a historic district.

Currently there are many building owners, who are already working with the local government thru the Planning / Zoning Commission and Permit process. They have the trust and confidence in the local government that is needed to complete a project. When the topic of Environ zones and the State approval process for anything within 500 feet of a historical property comes up, it literally stops everything. Unproductive property stays unproductive. Productive property is not being improved. It is hindering the local economy from growing. Nothing is happening because it scares property owners to death when they think about the fact that they must have State approval. By adopting SB 329 it will eliminate this fear and confusion.

It may sound silly that this fear is halting our economic growth but that is the truth. Our local government and the building owners want to preserve Chanute's history. They live in this community and they love this community. I have the faith that they will make the rules to preserve that history, that is loved by all, better than the State, who only sees the projects thru a visitor or an acquaintance's eye.

I beg of you to adopt Senate Bill No. 329 and put the decisions to ensure the integrity of historic properties in the hands of the local governments that live daily in these communities. It will help my small town of Chanute, as well as other small communities, and its wonderful citizens, to explode with economic growth.

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