



KANSAS SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS
A State Society of the National Society of Professional Engineers

To: Senate Assessment & Tax Committee
From: Wayne E. Nelson, PE; Kansas Professional Society of Engineers
Date: March 17, 2017
Re: Support of SB 224

Madam Chair and members of the subcommittee,
Thank you for the opportunity to voice our support of SB 224.

The Kansas Society of Professional Engineers (KSPE) represents the individual licensed engineers across the state. For over 100 years, KSPE has worked to promote engineering by delivering professional development services, encouraging licensure, and advocating legislation and public policy for the betterment of human welfare and the industry.

SB 224 would attempt to generate revenue for the State Highway Fund by increasing fuel taxes by a nickel. The current comprehensive transportation plan, known as T-WORKS, was put in place in 2010. To provide a stable funding source for the ten-year plan, the 2010 Legislature increased state sales tax a full penny with .4 cents designated for KDOT's State Highway Fund. Since this time, the State Highway Fund has been subject to endless sweeps to the State General Fund. This has been an ongoing trend for years, not specific to the current Administration. In contrast, funds generated from fuel tax to State Highway Fund are protected by the Kansas Constitution and cannot be transferred.

KSPE does not relish the idea of increasing fuel taxes. However, understanding the fiscal climate of the state and the remaining projects left uncompleted in the T-WORKS program, SB 224 could prove to help make good on the promise the ten-year plan started seven years ago. According to the Governor's proposed budgets for FY 2018 and FY 2019, the SB 224 would still only backfill a third of the projected transfers from the State Highway Fund. Understanding the many delayed and uncompleted T-WORKS projects, KSPE reluctantly sees SB 224 as a partial fix. Our strongest request is to encourage the Legislature to reduce the proposed transfers from the State Highway Fund.

Infrastructure safety is paramount to our society's mission. SB 224 can help make this possible. We encourage the support of SB 224.

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak on this matter.

Respectfully,

Wayne E. Nelson, P.E.
Kansas Society of Professional Engineers