Senate Ways & Means Committee

January 24, 2018

SB 285

Support; amendment requested

Madam Chair and members of the Senate Ways & Means Committee, I am Michael Murray of Capitol Advantage and I am here on behalf of my client, Ash Grove Cement Company. Jacqueline Clark, Ash Grove's government relations leader, is unable to join us here today as she is in another state Capitol. She sends her best regards.

As you may know, Ash Grove is the largest U.S.-owned cement manufacturer and is headquartered in Overland Park, Kansas. Last year the company celebrated its 135th anniversary in the cement manufacturing business. While you may be aware it is being acquired by CRH, plc., the company is and plans to continue operating here with "business as usual."

To that end, we support all efforts to fully fund transportation infrastructure in Kansas. We have been actively engaged in recent sessions to stem the tide of shifting funds away from transportation projects or to find additional revenue sources. We support SB 285, with one amendment. As our company's territory reaches from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Coast, we have extensive subject matter expertise and relationships with leaders in states where transportation infrastructure funding investments have been made in recent years, and we would like for the bill to be amended to include an individual from the cement manufacturing industry. The industry has a rich history in the state and is the raw material that is a component of ready mixed concrete. We believe Ash Grove could enhance the committee's discussion about approaches it will consider.

While we have a competitor that also is headquartered in Kansas, and we work collaboratively with them, we believe that our company's reach and scope would provide the greatest value as an addition to the committee.

The amendment would be simply adding: a representative of the Kansas cement manufacturing industry.

Thank you for your consideration of our requested amendment.