

To: Senate Ways & Means Committee
From: Manhattan, Emporia, Topeka and Lawrence Chamber of Commerce
Date: January 23, 2018
Re: Support of SB 285

Chairwoman McGinn and members of the committee,

The Chambers of Commerce on Manhattan, Emporia, Topeka, and Lawrence (METL) would like to express their full support for SB 285, a bill which would establish a joint legislative task force to meet and make recommendations regarding the needs of the transportation system over the next 10 years and beyond.

The four Chambers that make up the METL coalition represent more than 3,000 Kansas businesses. Each Chamber has supported T-WORKS since its inception in 2009. While we are aware of the difficult choices state government has been faced with in recent years, we have strongly opposed the diversion of funds from the TWORKS program – transfers that have resulted in the cancellation of many important transportation projects.

The Coalition recognizes the importance of a quality, well-maintained comprehensive highway system and is concerned with delays in previously approved projects as well as regularly scheduled maintenance of highways and bridges throughout the state. Specifically, the METL coalition supports the proposed turnpike interchange in Southeast Topeka, the expansion of the South Lawrence Trafficway (K10) from two lanes to four, and the replacement of the I-70/Polk/Quincy Viaduct.

A strategy must be developed to move these critical projects forward and SB 285 is a step in the right direction. We appreciate the committee's support for SB 285 and thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this matter.

Respectfully,

