



**18001 W. 106<sup>th</sup> St.**  
**Suite 150**  
**Olathe, KS 66061**  
**(913) 764-1050**  
**tmckee@olathe.org**

Rep. Tarwater, Chairman  
Members of the House Commerce and Economic Development  
Committee  
February 17, 2020

Re: Support of HB 2529

On behalf of the Olathe Chamber of Commerce, its Board of Directors, and its members, I respectfully ask the House Commerce Committee to support HB 2529 and renew STAR Bond legislation rather than allow this economic development tool to sunset.

The success of STAR Bonds in Kansas has been an impactful economic development tool for communities of all sizes throughout Kansas. Although Olathe has not used STAR Bonds as an economic development tool this incentive will continue to give Kansas a significant advantage in attracting development and creating destination tourism sites that in turn will bring visitors to our state and create entertainment opportunities that will help retain our workforce talent in Kansas.

However, as with many incentive programs, adjustments are necessary to retain the competitiveness and value of the program. HB 2529 represents several proposed improvements to the existing STAR Bonds program aimed at addressing concerns the program is not being used as intended. Such improvements include the increased investment limits for urban areas, inclusion of corporate headquarters and the required plan to track visitors. These enhancements as well as greater defined oversight by the KDOC provide protections the Chamber believes will ensure the program remains viable.

The State of Kansas and its communities have profited from the STAR Bonds program that generates new jobs and new revenue. We ask that you vote to preserve STAR Bonds because they are a valuable economic development tool for the State of Kansas. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of this bill.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim McKee".

Tim McKee, CEO, Olathe Chamber of Commerce