



February 17, 2020

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Wichita Regional Chamber and our 1,700 members employing nearly 150,00 Kansans, thank you for the opportunity to offer written testimony in support of H.B 2529; AN ACT concerning STAR bonds; relating to STAR bond projects, rural redevelopment projects, financing; eligible areas; major business or medical facility; real estate transfers; visitor number tracking plan; capital investment and annual sales requirements; STAR bond districts; project costs; sunset date

The Chamber strongly supports keeping this valuable economic development tool in place. Without question, the STAR Bonds program has been successful in creating billions of dollars in capital investment and resulted in thousands of new jobs in the state of Kansas.

The citizens of Wichita and south-central Kansas have and are currently benefiting from current STAR Bonds districts. Significant investment has been made in our region, and new and exciting developments are in the works, as well. It is an understatement to say that our region is a different and better place because of investments, jobs, and quality of life STAR Bonds have afforded us.

As is the case with any program or incentive, it is appropriate to review the rules and regulations from time to time to ensure that public policy goals are being met and that taxpayers are receiving the maximum level of protection and benefit. We support such reviews but caution the Legislature not to make substantive changes that would imperil the successes of the program.

Therefore, we strongly urge you to reauthorize STAR Bonds by reporting H.B. 2529 favorable for passage.

Very truly yours,

Jason P. Watkins
Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce