



Tuesday, February 18, 2020

To: Chair McGinn and Senate Ways and Means Committee

From: Tim Ross, President/CEO, GBA

RE: Support for SB 375

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a brief statement on our support for the FORWARD transportation plan. As a Kansas Corporation we serve numerous communities and businesses throughout the state, so safe mobility is of the utmost importance. Our departments of transportation at the state and local levels are doing stellar jobs with the resources they have, however there is so much more to do! We need a transportation system that supports travel to key hubs throughout the state and supports our economy.

For example, one of our clients is a manufacturer in McPherson. Our team, which supports numerous projects in their plant, is comprised of people that come from Kansas City, Wichita and Denver. Most drive to the area around McPherson for extended stays, while some fly in from Denver as needed. The commercial airport in Salina is a piece of the multimodal puzzle that serves growth in the surrounding region, and we are grateful for it. Those that can't fly must drive 60 to 460 miles and count on the condition and capacity of Kansas roads for their safety and ability to work. Vitality in the communities of Kansas depends on the condition and capacity of Kansas roads too.

When businesses like those in the industrial area of McPherson can get the resources they need from neighboring areas, the economy is supported in many ways. Our interest in McPherson has caused us to study the feasibility of building other commercial properties there. Still, it is important that we know we will have transportation and communications systems that will serve the users before we invest millions of dollars in the area. We also agree that broadband service is a necessity throughout the state so that Kansans are able to live where they are needed without sacrificing the ability to access services and education.

Thank you again for considering our thoughts on these essential aspects of FORWARD.