



The Kansas District Judges' Association



HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS

Hon. Rep. Troy Waymaster, Chair
Hon. Rep. Kyle Hoffman, Vice Chair
Hon. Rep. Kathy Wolfe Moore, R. M. Member

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WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 2541

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill. My name is Kim Cudney, and I am the President of the Kansas District Judges Association and Chief Judge of the 12th Judicial District (Cloud, Jewell, Lincoln, Mitchell, Republic, and Washington Counties).

On behalf of the KDJA, I wish to offer the Association's support for HB 2541. This bill modifies the distribution of certain user fees from the Judicial Branch's designated fee funds to the State General Fund. The effect of this change is to eliminate the dependence by the Judicial Branch upon the variable revenues obtained from user fees. This practice has resulted in instability in funding for the Judicial Branch which puts at risk the ability of this branch of government to properly serve its users. Last year, the Judicial Branch was forced to ask the Legislature for replacement funding when the pandemic caused insufficient docket fee revenue.

The provision of judicial services to our citizens and provision of compensation for our employees are core functions of our government. As such, they should be provided for in the State General fund rather than dependent upon fee revenue. The change proposed by this bill will not only stabilize the funding for the Judicial Branch, but also allow for predictability in the forecasting of the Branch's ability to provide necessary services to Kansans.

Importantly, it appears that this bill is revenue neutral. It simply transfers the deposit of revenues from fee funds to the State General Fund. Thus, it should also simplify the budgeting process for both the Judicial Branch and the Legislature.

In summary, for the reasons noted we ask that this Committee consider this bill favorably.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of KDJA,

Hon. Kim Cudney, KDJA President