

ACEC

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES
of Kansas

Affiliated with:
American Council of Engineering Companies
Kansas Society of Professional Engineers
National Society of Professional Engineers
Professional Engineers in Private Practice

TESTIMONY

TO: HOUSE TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC SAFETY BUDGET COMMITTEE

FROM: SCOTT HEIDNER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES OF
KANSAS (ACEC KANSAS)

RE: HB 2137

DATE: MARCH 6, 2013

Chairman Peck, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today. My name is Scott Heidner, and I am here in my capacity as Executive Director of ACEC Kansas to speak in opposition to HB 2137. ACEC Kansas is the trade association representing private consulting engineering businesses in Kansas.

Transportation funding is critical to the state of Kansas for reasons of both economics and public welfare.

Infrastructure investment not only creates immediate jobs for professions like ours, it increases our state's competitiveness by allowing us to more efficiently and safely transport goods and materials. A solid infrastructure base is tremendously important to businesses when deciding where to locate. In infrastructure, a penny today is likely to make and/or save you a dollar tomorrow.

It is also a good investment to help protect the safety and needs of our citizens. Safer roads make for safer citizens. But please also reflect on the impact this has on the less fortunate. The T-Works program helps support rural airports, which are often critical in transporting injured Kansans in timely fashion. It helps create and maintain transit systems which can accommodate our disabled and senior citizens. The use of new technology funded under this program will allow us to upgrade things such as traffic signals and curb cuts to ensure that our most vulnerable citizens can continue to live and thrive in their communities.

HB 2137 also perpetuates another long standing problem with Kansas infrastructure, namely the promise of funds for infrastructure which are later withdrawn. I know many of you share this frustration, and may have even voted against infrastructure funding at one time or another because you felt it to be misleading to taxpayers when the money is so often swept away for

other purposes. Nobody shares this frustration more than the members of ACEC Kansas. However, perpetuating the habit by adopting the discontinuation of funds outlined in HB 2137 would be extremely harmful to the T-Works program.

Finally, I want to point out that the T-Works program was designed in the closest of consultation with Kansas businesses, communities, and local elected officials. KDOT went to enormous effort to make sure all voices were heard, and built a program that reflected the needs of Kansas citizens and communities. The Kansans that participated, and indeed all Kansans, have been promised a fantastic program that will grow the economy and improve public safety. Please don't withdraw from that promise. I urge you to vote "no" on HB 2137.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today, and I would be happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.