



Mr. Chairman and Members of the Senate Taxation committee:

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support for the future funding of roads and highways in our great state.

As the Economic Development Director in Great Bend, we are keenly aware of the importance of safety and the reliability of our state highways and local roads and bridges in the pursuit of attracting and retaining businesses. The quality of a community's infrastructure is probably the most "noticeable" feature when companies are choosing a community in which to locate. We feel it is essential to provide both quality state highways, and assist with funding for local governmental entities, in order for them to maintain city and county streets. Infrastructure reliability and safety are paramount for our future growth.

In 2016 Great Bend was selected from over 100 applications to receive funding from KDOT – Rail Division for the development of a transload facility. While still in its infancy, we have already experienced tremendous support for this facility and are currently storing over 300 wind component pieces. In the next several months, more blades, towers, and nacelles will be arriving in Great Bend by both rail and truck. These heavy loads are the best example of the need for reliable and safe roads and highways, and the importance of getting products to market in a timely and efficient manner.

At this time, you have the opportunity to explore various funding mechanisms to ensure that The Kansas Department of Transportation is adequately funded to meet these safety and reliability needs. In recent years the state has, with the sweep of highway funds, basically eliminated financial support for city and county roads projects. To this end, we would greatly appreciate your consideration of SB 224 as one of the best funding options available at this time to solve this very important issue. The future of economic growth in Great Bend depends on your decision.

Thank you again for your consideration, and should you need additional information or have any questions please contact me – jpeters@greatbend.org or 620.792.2401.

Jan Peters, President
Great Bend Chamber of Commerce & Economic Development