Written Testimony in Support of HB 2509
Mayor Dustin Wright
Mayor, City of Americus

March 6, 2020

Chair and members of the committee,

I am pleased to submit written testimony in strong support of HB 2509 on behalf of the City of Americus, Kansas. Americus is a small community in Kansas, founded in 1857. The City of Americus represents the consensus views of its over 800 residents.

The land was platted in the mid 1800's with one block dedicated for a college and an adjoining block dedicated for a park. It is not realistic to ever assume a college could be located on the property known as college block due to the proximity to K-State and Emporia State University. The city of Americus already has a centrally located park in the middle of town and there is also land that occupies a ball field that serves the community.

HB 2509 would ensure the community of Americus could enhance the tax base through development of the property instead of having vacant lots as they are currently. The bill will present opportunities for growth of the community through new construction.

The reforms contained in HB 2509 are key for allowing for the city to provide additional opportunities for expansion of available building sites. The failure of the Kansas legislature to pass HB 2509 will continue to leave the land vacant and unavailable for potential growth of the community as it has for over 100 years. The City of Americus and it's residents can not afford to continue to have unusable land.

Finally, we would implore the legislature to consider the following: Based on existing Kansas law, the only way to effectively change the use of these platted properties is through legislation. With the passage of HB 2509 the City of Americus can continue to grow economically.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments, we strongly urge you to vote HB 2509 favorably for passage.

Dustin R. Wright, Mayor
City of Americus