

Smoky Hill



Development Corporation

Chairman Hutton and Committee Members:

I am here to testify in strong support of HB 2648 which will restore a vocational house building program at the Ellsworth Correctional Facility. The Smoky Hill Development Corporation, the economic development arm of Ellsworth County, feels this will strengthen our rural community by addressing many needs our state is currently facing.

This administration has championed efforts in addressing the shortage of affordable work force housing we currently face. House Bill 2648 is a public/private/non-profit partnership that not only serves as a solution to housing, but also increases local job creation, increased property tax revenue, and a future qualified work force.

Unfortunately, during the hearing you will not be able to hear from many of our local contractors whom are in full support of this bill because they are maintaining their current commitments. Our local business leaders, members of the local Chamber of Commerce, realize the benefits of this program in many regards for not only their business but also for the community. Businesses specializing in ready-mix, lumber sales, flooring, landscape, banking, title work, electrical, HVAC, banking, insurance, house moving and general building will see a direct impact.

Today you will hear from many of our community leaders in support of this program. They will focus on the need for additional housing, the impacts on the local rural economy, recidivism, creating additional property tax revenue, and the fact that banking cannot always make the necessary loans to citizens wanting to build a house under the current manufactured housing climate. These are issues facing many of the communities throughout the state.

Ellsworth County is one of the few growing communities in rural Kansas. House Bill 2648 is a piece of the puzzle to solving the shortage of rural housing, but it will also create local economic activity, bolster local property and sales tax, and utilize a work force that can benefit our future.

Thank you for your service and consideration of this important bill. Also joining me are:

Gary Urbanek, State Farm Agent

Scott Moore, Ellsworth City Administrator

Justin Lindsley, former owner of Ellsworth Ready-Mix

Kermit Rush, Ellsworth County Commissioner

Johnnie Goddard, acting Secretary of Corrections and former Ellsworth Correctional Facility Warden

Curt Glaser, First Bank of Kansas

Submitted by:

Rob Fillion

Executive Director