

House Transportation Committee
Testimony in Support of House Bill 2229

Presented by: Terry Campbell

February 17, 2015

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Terry Campbell and I appear before you today, along with the former Director of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, Larry Welch, in support of House Bill 2229 designating the interchange at Interstate 70 and 110th Street in Kansas City, Kansas in Wyandotte County as the Bert Cantwell Memorial Interchange

We are here today, not only as friends but professional associates of Bert's. I served as Sheriff of Leavenworth County when Bert was Sheriff of Wyandotte County, and Larry served as Director of the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center, prior to becoming KBI Director, when Bert served as the Chairman of the Kansas Law Enforcement Standards and Training Commission.

Bert Cantwell came to Kansas City, Kansas to be a janitor at the General Motors Plant. In 1965, after getting his barber's license, he opened Bert's Downtown Barber Service. He quickly made himself known in political circles and became a strong supporter of Kansas City and Wyandotte County. He was appointed Sheriff of Wyandotte County by then Governor Robert Docking after the sudden death of the incumbent sheriff. In 1973, Bert was elected to that office where he remained until being appointed in 1977 as the United States Marshal for the district of Kansas by then President Jimmy Carter.

During Bert's tenure as sheriff he continued his education going to evening classes at Donnelly College. He not only received his Associates Degree, but continued his education when he became U.S. Marshal receiving his Bachelors and Law Degree from Washburn University in Topeka.

Other accomplishments and indications of Bert Cantwell's dedication to public service are having served as the Superintendent of the Kansas Highway Patrol from 1983-1987 and again in 1991-1992 when he resigned to become the President of the Kansas City, Kansas Chamber of Commerce, a position he held until his death in 1996. He also served as the governor's liaison to the Kansas Senate in the early 1980's. Bert served in these various prestigious positions while never forgetting his beginnings and always supporting Wyandotte County and Kansas City when, once upon a time, was not an easy task. I know since, once upon a time, Leavenworth was in the same situation.

Bert Cantwell was known as a jovial bridge-builder throughout Wyandotte County and the State of Kansas. One of Bert's traits was a knack for communicating with every kind of person, no matter race, gender, religion or even political party. A lot of us are talkers, Bert was a listener. During all the years I knew Bert, I never heard him interrupt someone talking to him or arguing their case. On many occasions I heard the comment that if you couldn't get along with Bert you can't get along with anyone. Bert Cantwell was universally liked and well-respected.

We feel the location of I-70 and 110th Street in Kanas City is the absolute perfect location to honor Mr. Cantwell for several reasons. It is obviously in Wyandotte County, where Bert served as Sheriff. It is in KCK, where he served in his last job

as President of the Kansas City Chamber of Commerce. It intersects Interstate 70, in recognition of his leadership as head of the Kansas Highway Patrol and his federal appointment as U.S. Marshal for Kansas. And finally, it is the appropriate location because it leads south into Edwardsville where he resided at the time of his death and where he is buried.

I have received support from the Mayor of Edwardsville and a Commissioner for the Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas Unified Government to present this matter to their commissions for support which both felt would be received favorably.

I understand there are costs associated with this bill related to the creation of the signs, placement and upkeep. I have made contacts and received commitments which I will diligently pursue should this bill be passed, placed into law and the exact costs known.

I respectfully ask you to favorably pass this bill to honor Bert Cantwell so his professional accomplishments and dedication to Wyandotte County, Kansas City and the state of Kansas will be memorialized for all those to see as they pass by Interchange I-70 and 110th Street.

Thank you for your time. (Larry)