

Testimony

By the Kansas Contractors Association before the House Appropriations
Committee regarding the Budget—SB 389

February 3, 2016

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Appropriations, I am Bob Totten, Executive Vice President for the Kansas Contractors Association. Our organization represents over 335 companies who are involved in the construction of highways and water treatment facilities in Kansas and the Midwest.

Today, I want to thank you for allowing me to testify on Senate Bill 389.

I am centering my attention on the proposal to transfer \$25 million dollars from KDOT to the general fund in FY 2017. Our organization which is made up of small businesses believes there has to be a better way than to always go to KDOT to bail out the shortfall in the state's budget. So far with the information I have, it appears KDOT will lose over \$835 million dollars in FY 2016 and FY 2017. Overall, since the passage of T Works, KDOT has seen the diversion of \$2.1 billion dollars from its coffers for other purposes.

This is not how the program was passed in 2010 when 105 county commissions passed resolutions supporting a long term transportation program. I can assure none of those resolutions said that in year 2016 and 2017 that over \$800 million would be used to bail out the state's budget.

Our organization which builds over 85 % of the roads and bridges in Kansas know that the roads and bridges are going to suffer from these cutbacks in preservation efforts.

We have we already seeing a deterioration of the pavement in some areas of the state....and we know it is going to get worst.

KDOT officials have also told us that the department is only going to address 200 miles of roads this year when it normally addresses 1200 miles. And instead of repairing fixing 115 bridges, the department will only fix 58. That is less than half of the needs already identified by KDOT.

It is our contention that the safety and the efficiency of our transportation system is being compromised and we will see the ramifications in future years. This committee, this legislature has to stay stop....has to change direction and quit using KDOT as the bank.

Today or when you work this bill, I urge you to change your priorities and stop diverting funds from KDOT. We know good roads and we recognize that cutting back on preservation will only hurt our state in the future.