

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Carol E. Beggs at 3:38 p.m. on January 31, 2001 in Room 522-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Rep. Ballou - Excused  
Rep. Aday - Excused

Committee staff present: Darrell McNeil - Revisor  
Hank Avila - Advisor  
Russell Mills - Advisor  
Carol Doel - Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Marion Cott - Kansas Humanities Council  
Dr. Raymond Powers - Kansas State Historical Society  
Bobbie Athon - Kansas State Historical Society  
Clint Riley - Wild Life & Parks  
Jean Barbee - TIAK

Others attending: See attached List

**Presentation by Marion Cott, Executive Director, of the Kansas Humanities Council**

The Humanities Council is a non-profit cultural organization that conducts and supports programs that promote understanding of the history and cultural traditions that influence Kansas communities and the lives of people who live there. This Council was formed in 1972 and governed by a 22-member board of directors, five of whom were appointed by the Governor.

KHC is not a state agency, but functions similar to the Kansas Arts Commission and the Kansas State Historical Society.

For the past five years the Humanities Council has been active in promotion of heritage tourism in Kansas. Heritage tourism is described as tourism that provides the traveler opportunities to experience and learn the "authentic story" of a place – its' history, architecture, art, and its' living traditions.

Some of the tourism events supported by KHC are Barn Again, Great Plains Chautauqua, 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Buster Keaton Celebration, and Rendezvous 2000. These have been quite successful. Kansas was one of three states chosen by the Smithsonian Institute to host Barn Again.

Upcoming events include Great Plains Chautauqua, Yesterday's Tomorrows, and Kansas Chautauqua. The Humanities Council is seeking \$50,000 from the legislature in support of Yesterday's Tomorrows.

KHC's total request from the legislature for FY 2002 is \$185,000. (Attachment 1)

**Guest speaker Dr. Raymond Powers, Executive Director, of the Kansas State Historical Society**

On Monday, January 29, Kansas celebrated its 140th birthday. Fourteen hundred students, families and adults braced icy and snowy road to attend Kansas Day activities.

Americans use museums to come to know the past and to establish their identity. The past serves as a guide to our present and future. The Society serves the role of preserving and presenting the past in Kansas.

The Society relies on funds from a unique program established by the Legislature. The visitor donation match program provides that for every dollar contributed to the Museum and Sites the State matches up to \$60,000.

Mr. Powers pointed out that pride in a place – Kansas – comes only through understanding its' history and

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE TOURISM COMMITTEE, Room 522-S State Capitol at 3:38 p.m. on January 31, 2001

culture. (Attachment 2)

Bobbie Athon, also from the Kansas State Historical Society, gave each member of the committee a packet compiled by KSHC with several pamphlets which are being distributed through motel lobby placement service.

Chairman Beggs introduced to the committee a fax received from Mr. Stan Christiansen, of Hudson, Kansas. Mr. Christiansen has been a professional guide. Since he was unable to be present, his fax contained his opposition to **HB 2098**. (Attachment 3)

Chairman Beggs also called to note additional information which was submitted by Mary Lou McPhail in answer to some questions which had been asked of her at the time of her presentation. (Attachment 4)

Mr. Clint Riley, of the Wild Life and Parks Department, was present as a proponent for **HB 2098** to answer any additional questions regarding his presentation on January 29, 2001.

Jean Barbee appeared as an opponent to **HB 2098** stating that the problem was the complexity of the requirements for licensing guides for guide services. (Attachment 5)

Chairman Beggs proposed that we continue the working of the bill on Monday, February 5, 2001 and adjourned the meeting at 5:15 p.m.





# TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE TOURISM COMMITTEE

Presented by  
Marion Cott, Executive Director  
Kansas Humanities Council  
January 31, 2001

## INTRODUCTION:

Thank you for this opportunity to offer testimony before the House Tourism Committee. My name is Marion Cott, and I am executive director of the Kansas Humanities Council. The Humanities Council is a nonprofit cultural organization that conducts and supports programs statewide that promote understanding of the history and cultural traditions that influence Kansas communities and the people who live here. Formed in 1972, the Council is governed by a 22-member board of directors, five of whom are appointed by the Governor.

KHC is not a state agency, but we function in ways similar to the Kansas Arts Commission and the KSHS. KHC is funded in part by an annual award from National Endowment for the Humanities; since 1989, a modest appropriation from the State of Kansas; and through private support from individuals, businesses and foundations. KHC is much smaller than either KAC or KSHS, and of the three, KHC is the only one that both makes grants and conducts its own programs. The Council's current total budget is only \$655,700. We're small, but we're active. By looking at the map in your packet, you'll see that in 2000, KHC sponsored 760 programs around the state and served 132 communities.

## HERITAGE TOURISM:

For the past five years or so, the Humanities Council has been active in promoting heritage tourism in Kansas. As you know, heritage tourism is one of the hottest trends in tourism around the country. Heritage tourism is described as tourism that provides the traveler opportunities to experience and learn the "authentic story" of a place -- its history, architecture, art, and its living traditions. Put another way, it's travel directed toward experiencing the "special character" of a place.

The tourism industry's research that heritage tourists are well-worth "courting" because of the economic benefits to a community and the state. Here's why:

- heritage tourists stay an average of a half-day longer than tourists.
- heritage tourists spend an average of \$62 a day more than other tourists.
- heritage tourists have more expendable income for shopping and related activities.
- heritage tourists typically stay in motel/hotels.

The way that KHC got involved in the area of heritage tourism was by attending in 1997 the Mountain/Plains regional conference on travel and tourism, at which the main topic was heritage tourism. The gathering brought together staff and volunteer directors of cultural agencies, representatives of the travel industry, and public officials for discussion of ways the various entities could work together to promote tourism. About 25 people attended from Kansas. The result has been much stronger communication and partnership between the various cultural groups, state agencies,

and the tourism industry. The timing was perfect since the Department of Travel and Tourism was initiating its planning process. The Humanities Council participated in that process and has found great support from Claudia Larkin and Mary Lou McPhail for our projects. The Council is now a member of TIAK and benefiting from that relationship. In partnership with the Kansas Museums Association and the KSHS, the Humanities Council helped to sponsor and conduct a series of workshops around the state for museums to acquaint them more heritage tourism.

All these partnerships have been a fine learning opportunity and convinced the KHC board that developing and funding programs that fit the heritage tourism niche and appeal to self-identified heritage tourists is an important contribution the Council can make to the state. The humanities are about telling the human story in all its grandeur and complexity. The Humanities Council is convinced that humanities-based programs can tell the story of Kansas, of the lives of ordinary and extraordinary people who live here-- and do it in ways that entertain, educate, and attract visitors to our communities.

### **KHC AND HERITAGE TOURISM:**

I want to tell you about several heritage tourism projects sponsored by the Kansas Humanities Council that attract tourists regionally and nationally as well as encourage Kansans to travel instate.

#### Barn Again!: Celebrating as American Icon

Kansas was one of three states selected by the Smithsonian Institution to host Barn Again! a special touring exhibit designed for small venues and rural communities. The tour, which began June 1999 and concluded in May 2000, served eight communities: Lindsborg, Colby, Fredonia, Arkansas City, Winfield, Highland, Hiawatha, and Elkhart. As part of KHC's appropriation, state funds covered exhibit rental fees, shipping, marketing/promotion, and up to \$2,500 per community in support of local programming and publicity.

Barn Again! was a highly successful project, and the reasons are clear: the universal appeal of barns; the desire to native Kansans and visitors to learn more about authentic rural heritage; the prestige and expertise of the Smithsonian in designing the basic exhibit; and the highly creative local programming developed by the host communities. Without the state funds, the local host organizations-- all on limited and restricted annual budgets-- would not have been able to take on a project of this size.

Barn Again! results are impressive. In each of the 8 host communities there was a substantial increase in the number of visitors coming to the museum and into the community. It is estimated that approximately 54,000 people participated in the 11-month tour. We know that the host museums in some cases doubled their attendance for the six-week period of the exhibit compared to the same period the previous year.

We also know that sales in the museum stores increased, and have indication that other businesses benefited as well. Here are a few examples:

- Lindsborg, 5,067 visitors in six weeks, compared to 2,182 (same period ,1998) gift shop sales increased 139%

- Colby, 5,654 visitors, compared with the museum's annual attendance of 10,000.
- Fredonia had a 15-fold increase in visitors in the 6 week period, including 50 tour buses who scheduled tours for passengers en route to Branson, MO.

Because of the state's outstanding response to Barn Again!, the Smithsonian has selected Kansas to host another touring exhibit in 2002, Yesterday's Tomorrows, which I'll take about later on in the testimony.

### Great Plains Chautauqua

Summer means the return of Chautauqua to our state. Since 1983, KHC has sponsored the Great Plains Chautauqua, a touring tent program that bring history alive through first-person characterizations of famous (and sometimes infamous) people from our nation's past. Our current theme is "Behold Our New Century: Early 20th Century Visions of America," and features Theodore Roosevelt, Booker T. Washington, Jane Addams, Andrew Carnegie, and Native American Ohiyesa.

Chautauqua has a five-day run in a community. Each evening under the tent at the city park, one of the famous visitors steps from the past and talks about his or her vision for America. During the day there are programs for children and adults. Last summer in Lyons and Independence, well-over 5,000 people attended, which included in-state and out-of-state visitors. In 2001, Chautauqua will be in Ottawa, June 22 -27 and Lindsborg, June 29 - July 3. In both communities, a steering committee made up of representatives from the convention and visitors bureaus, arts councils, museums, schools and colleges are already at work to attract visitors and townspeople to the array of activities being planned.

### 9th Annual Buster Keaton Celebration

It's hard to believe when you first hear it, but Buster Keaton, one of the comedic geniuses of our times, was born in Piqua, Kansas, when his parents were touring southeast Kansas as part of a vaudevillian troupe. The annual Buster Keaton Celebration in Iola, which occurs through a grant that KHC makes to the Bowlus Fine Arts Center, brings together townfolks, film buffs, young people, older citizens, scholars, out-of-towners, and local residents to watch wonderful silent movies and early "talkies" and hear lively presentations about film-making, the nature of comedy, and how film reflects society. Last September, the two-day event attracted around 3,000 participants, representing 61 Kansas communities, 18 different states, and two people from England. In addition, the event was covered by the New York Times. (See article in your folder)

### Rendezvous 2000

Since 1980, KHC has been a major sponsor of this biannual symposium about the Santa Fe Trail sponsored by the Santa Fe Trail Center in Larned. About 1000 people attended the two-day conference last April. This number included people from 8 states and 29 other Kansas communities. Each year the symposium takes on a different topic related

to the history of the trail: trade, Native Americans, the Mexican influence, the daily lives of people who traveled the trail and so forth. There are talks, trail rides, exhibits, cook-outs, cultural demonstrations -- something for people of all ages.

## Upcoming Events

Great Plains Chautauqua -- As mentioned this summer the Chautauqua will be in Ottawa and Lindsborg. Both these communities are well-organized and geographically situated to draw people from surrounding communities and even the nearby metropolitan area. The Humanities Council will be working closely with the CVBs in each community to help market the five-day event widely across the state.

Yesterday's Tomorrows -- In 2002, the Humanities Council will bring another Smithsonian exhibit to the state for touring March through December. See the flyer in your packet for a description of the exhibit and a list of the host communities and schedule. Twenty-four communities requested the exhibit. Yesterday's Tomorrows presents an historical overview of what Americans thought the future would look like, beginning in 1900 and continuing thought the late 20th century.

Yesterday's Tomorrows is just the kind of project that appeals to heritage tourists, in that there is an opportunity to learn something about our history; to participate in the life of a smaller community; and be entertained by the local events that accompany the exhibit.

The Kansas Humanities Council will provide the communities with assistance in planning, statewide publicity and even access to promotion through a national website, and \$2,000 in funding support for community programs, such as a companion exhibit, guest lecturers, science fiction film series or book discussion.

The Humanities Council, as part of its FY 2002 request is seeking \$50,000 of support from the Legislature to help with Yesterday's Tomorrows.

Kansas Chautauqua -- In 2004, Kansas will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the creation of the Kansas Territory. The Humanities Council intends to help Kansans mark that important event by premiering a special chautauqua with the working titled of "Bleeding Kansas: Where the Civil War Began." Modeled after the Great Plains Chautauqua, this Kansas Chautauqua will have all the traditional components of first-person characterization, topical workshops for children and adults, entertainment. We also plan to encourage film series, book discussions, arts and crafts displays, a young chautauqua program that will teach youngsters how to do first-person characterizations, elderhostels, and a range of activities.

The Council, with some funding last session from the Legislature, is well into the planning process. We have begun to solicit inquiries from communities and in October made a presentation to the annual conference of TIAK. There is a great deal of enthusiasm. Over 60 inquires were received from the initial announcement; of that now 30 are still actively bidding to host the event.

The Council's goal is to run the program for two years, serving 4 communities each summer, which will alternate hosting the event. Each community will host the chautauqua twice and by knowing the schedule well in advance there will be ample opportunity for promotion and marketing.

We plan to have the communities selected by fall and the program well in hand by this time next year. Chautauqua will be funded through a combination of public and private funds. The Council will, obviously, be putting funding into it; we will seek private support and ask the communities for financial contributions. In addition, our plan is to seek some funding from the Legislature at the next session. We've had conversations with TIAK and with the Department of Travel and Tourism, both of whom are supportive of this endeavor. It's a big project but the Council is committed to its success because we think chautauqua is the perfect heritage tourism product, one that supports the state's tourism agenda.

Related to the 150th anniversary, KHC is seeking funding from the Legislature in this session for some additional program funds. These funds would be for grants to historical societies, museums and grassroot groups to create exhibits, develop historical tours, make documentaries, conduct research on the topic of the Kansas Territory. We receive inquiries from groups that want to participate in the celebration but need some funding for special projects. Though 2004 seems a long time away, it's just around the corner in terms of the planning time and marketing needs of organizations that want to use the anniversary as a means of attracting tourists into their community.

In your packets you'll find a summary of KHC's legislative request for FY2002. The total request is \$185,000. The Governor has recommended \$85,000, which will be used for Great Plains Chautauqua, Resource Center Programs (such as History Alive!, Speakers Bureau, and TALK), and the Heritage Grant Program. KHC is requesting the remaining dollars – \$100,000 – from the Legislature to support Yesterday's Tomorrows and grants in support of the 150th anniversary. We'd appreciate your support of this request.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to talk about the Humanities Council. I'll be happy to respond to your questions and comments.



Testimony Before the House Tourism Committee, Wednesday, January 31, 2001, by Ramon Powers, Executive Director, Kansas State Historical Society.

**Chairman Beggs and members of the Committee, I am Ramon Powers, Executive Director of the Kansas State Historical Society. With me today are Bobbie Athon, the Society's Public Information Officer, and Terry Marmet, Director of the Society's Historic Sites Division.**

**Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, Kansas celebrated its 140<sup>th</sup> birthday. As you know, I appeared before the House to tell about the origins of state government; however, I returned to our Museum where 1,400 students, families, and adults braved the icy and snowy roads to attend Kansas Day activities that connected them to our state and its fascinating history.**

**With suit and tie minus the coat, I assisted students who came to our booth to grind wheat into flour. Some were surprised to learn that flour came from wheat and the kernels of wheat came from a wheat stalk; I took a head of wheat and peeled out the kernels as they watched in fascination. The students loved to turn the grinder and some wanted to make certain that they took home the flour from the wheat they had ground.**

**Our staff and volunteers reported one third grader saying: "We barely got to see any of the museum because we were doing all the activities. People should come to the museum more often because it's really fun." Another said: "You never know what you're going to learn."**

**At the December event we call Creative Holidays, Jim Ramberg, outdoor writer for the Topeka Capital-Journal reported in his column that his 4-year-old daughter told him on the way home**

from the museum “I liked that place.”

Those are the voices of young people who experienced the Museum and its activities. The comments from our adult visitors are even more resounding in praise. One person wrote on our visitor comment cards: “Excellent! Best I have seen in the U.S.A.” Another said “The Museum is outstanding! Good as anything done at the Smithsonian in D.C. where I have been an active volunteer.”

Several weeks ago I provided a tour to author Michael Fedo of Minneapolis, Minnesota. He e-mailed me that he and his wife “enjoyed your gracious and informative hosting of our tour of your wonderful Museum of History.” It was the highlight of their visit to Topeka.

And, there are our fifteen state historic sites. A visitor at Fort Hays commented that “No other location could have matched the setting we had at the Old Fort.” At Hollenberg Station a visitor wrote: “Very well done! Very interesting. We loved it and will be Back.” From Pawnee Indian Village a visitor responded: “A beautifully done exhibit! Compares favorably with Mesa Verde and other federal sites. Appreciated the excellent guide!” At Mine Creek Battlefield, a visitor wrote: “The Visitors Center and its displays are very well done. Everyone involved should be congratulated. Thank you for all your efforts.”

The Museum and Historic Sites and the programs we provide such as Kansas Day on January 29th, Creative Holidays (before Christmas), the History and Environmental Fair (in the Spring), and an array of activities throughout the year engages visitors with Kansas’ past. The experiences we provide foster a pride and sense of place for those who come to view the exhibits and participate in

programs.

In a survey of Americans on how they use the past and what that past means to them, respondents said they come to know the past through family and places like museums. These places have a high level of credibility with them. They also stated that they use the past to establish their identity (who they are) and that assists them in forming their notions of appropriate actions and behaviors. The past serves as the guide to our present and future. The Society serves the role of preserving and presenting that past in Kansas.

To produce the programs about the past and to promote the Museum and our State Historic Sites as places where the past is preserved and presented, we have relied on funds from a unique program the Legislature established three years ago. The visitor donation match program provides that for every dollar contributed to the Museum and Sites (and the Research Center) the State matches up to 60 thousand. With the visitor donation match program at the Sites, the dollars contributed remains there and the match goes to promote the historic sites as a whole. The funds donated at the Museum and Research Center are targeted for educational and promotional activities such as:

The 17 Historic Sites brochure

The Kansas Travel Guide advertisement

Sites billboards

Underwriting messages on Kansas public radio stations

Bobbie Athon will review these and other ways we have used the visitor donation match moneys. Unfortunately, we have had a period of time when our graphic designer position was open. We now have a talented artist on staff and are catching up on the many

brochures and promotional pieces scheduled to go to the State Printer.

Regarding the donations, one visitor noted: "Thanks for voluntarily asking for donations. Every family can afford different amounts and appreciates no set charge." We did see a dramatic increase in donations with the visitor donation match program. These funds are vital to our public programming and promotional activities. We know that Kansans have a growing number of choices about how they spend their leisure time and that we must continue to provide them with quality and innovative experiences.

Telling the public about our programs and facilities has not been easy. Many of us have had the experience of hearing someone say, "I did not know Kansas had a state museum?" Or, more likely, "I am amazed that Kansas would build a museum of such high quality." When I first joined the Society and for a number of years after we did not have any funds for the promotion of the museum and our sites. We were here for those who could find us. (I would note that a major initiative by TIAK and the Governor's Council on Tourism – the Grow Kansas Initiative – is funding marketing of the state.) A visitor admonished us: "You need to advertise more. My advice is to do something. Brag a little." He told us what we already knew, but we have begun to make our presence known over the air waves, at the State Fair, and along the highways. The Topeka Convention and Visitors Bureau placed the Society's museum on a billboard located just east of Abilene. We are on our way. However, it is the visitor donation match that holds the key to our future for public programming and promotion.

We are working feverishly to increase the visibility of the Society and its museum and historic sites. We know that 43 percent of



**Kansas tourists visit historic sites, 38 percent visit museums. We must do what we can to develop our historic sites; we are presenting a package to several committees that would continue the rehabilitation of our state historic sites. I would be pleased to provide you with information on our sites development plan. We will continue improving the museum with new interactives and changing exhibits, which are costly.**

**Finally, I want to suggest that promoting Kansas heritage, which is what we will continue to do with the visitor donation match, goes to the heart of any strategy to promote the growth and development of our state and its citizens. It is vital in educating Kansans about their past; the young people of Kansas will seek opportunities in their home state first if they have pride and devotion to place -- to their state. Pride in a place -- in Kansas -- comes only through understanding its history and culture.**

**Support of the Society and its programs through funding the visitor match will benefit not just those of us in the present, it serves to strengthen the bonds of identity that makes us Kansans. I ask for your endorsement of this wonderful and efficient program.**



ACKLEY FINANCIAL GROUP

Stan E. Christiansen

To  
Representative Carol Beggs  
Room 115 South  
From  
Stan Christiansen  
4 pages

Registered Representative New England Securities  
569 NE 120th Street Hudson, KS 67545 316-458-3182  
Branch Office: 16800 Dallas Parkway, Suite 200, Dallas, Texas 75248 469-737-4000 Fax 469-737-4084

Registered Representative New England Securities  
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House Tourism Committee

January 31, 2001

Attachment 3

P. 01



ACKLEY FINANCIAL  
GROUP

Stan E. Christiansen

I believe the limit should be raised to \$12-\$15,000 and 30 days. We do not need to police farmers and ranchers trying to add to their income and provide a service to the tourism of Kansas.

The new deer permit which allows farmers and ranchers to transfer to anyone and make an unlimited amount of money. This was passed by the Kansas legislators last year to allow farmers to make up for crop losses. The permit allowed them to make money off of the whole hunting unit, not just their own land. Some permits went for \$1,000 to \$2,500. I've not heard of any higher.

Registered Representative New England Securities  
569 NE 120th Street Hudson, KS 67545 316-458-3182  
Branch Office: 16800 Dallas Parkway, Suite 200, Dallas, Texas 75248 469-737-4000 Fax 469-737-4084



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GROUP

Stan E. Christiansen

I appreciate your time and consideration. My husband & I do not need to police the whole State of Kansas.

Sincerely  
Stan Christiansen



(1)



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Stan E. Christiansen

1/31/01

Representative Carol Beggs

Dear Sir.

I am writing concerning H.B. 2098.

On page 6, lines 38 thru 43. If this changes passes, every farmer, rancher, Chamber of Commerce in the State of Kansas, merchants who make money from the sale of hunting and fishing equipment, will need a commercial guides license.

The reason, most of them help or line up hunts and fishing trips for people or give recommendations. If they receive anything - gas - meals - gifts, etc, they will be in violation. Lines 32 thru 37 describe the services that are covered.

Registered Representative New England Securities  
569 NE 120th Street Hudson, KS 67545 316-458-3182

Branch Office: 16800 Dallas Parkway, Suite 200, Dallas, Texas 75248 469-737-4000 Fax 469-737-4084

3-4



BILL GRAVES, GOVERNOR  
GARY SHERRER, LT. GOVERNOR/SECRETARY

700 S.W. Harrison Street, Suite 1300  
Topeka, Kansas 66603-3712

(785) 296-2009 Fax: (785) 296-6988  
TTY (Hearing Impaired): (785) 296-3487  
www.kansas-travel.com  
e-mail: travtour@kdoch.state.ks.us

Honorable Carol Beggs  
125 Overhill Road  
Salina, Kansas 67401

Dear Representative Beggs:

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before the House Tourism Committee last week to share the Travel and Tourism Division's programs. The committee presented some great questions and I hope I was able to answer them thoroughly.

I am enclosing the following information which members of the committee requested:

- 1999 Attraction Attendance figures
- FY '99 Attraction Development Grants awarded
- FY '00 Attraction Development Grants awarded
- FY '01 Attraction Development Grants awarded (first round only)
- List by counties of applications received (not necessarily awarded) from 1999-2001

I would also like to provide you with some figures our research person has arrived at if the division's advertising budget was increased to a million dollars.

Advertising budget at **\$500,000:**

- Gross economic impact = \$25,444,440 (Return on Investment, ROI, \$47 to \$1 spent)  
Net economic impact = \$ 9, 188,306 (Return on Investment, ROI, \$17 to \$1 spent)

Advertising budget at **\$1,000,000:**

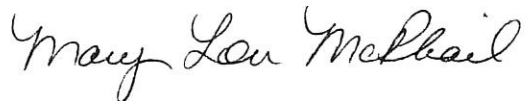
- Gross economic impact = \$69,048,588 (Return on Investment, ROI, \$69 to \$1 spent)  
Net economic impact = \$25,893,220 (Return on Investment, ROI, \$26 to \$1 spent)

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Attachment 4

These calculations are based on the projection that an increase in the advertising budget will increase the conversion rate and average spending by 10%. The gross economic impact is based on the number of people receiving travel guides, while the net economic impact is based on the number of people who made travel decisions after receiving the travel guides.

I hope this information is helpful to your committee and would ask that you call with any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Lou McPhail".

Mary Lou McPhail  
Director



**Travel  
Industry  
Association of  
Kansas**

**300 SW Eighth – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Topeka, KS 66603**

**785-233-9465**

## **TESTIMONY**

**DATE: January 31, 2001**

**TO: House Tourism Committee**

**FROM: Jean Barbee, Executive Director**

**RE: Commercial Guide Requirements (HB-2098)**

My name is Jean Barbee and I represent the Travel Industry Association of Kansas. That organization is made up primarily of convention and visitors bureaus, attractions and tourist services. The major expertise of TIAK members is in marketing and promotion, with lesser emphasis on product development and services. We do, however, work closely with other entities that are more focused on these 'legs' of the tripod, i.e. those who develop products and deliver services to Kansas visitors. In some instances these entities may be private developers while in others they may be public agencies.

TIAK has been more than pleased with the Department's recognition of the tourism aspects of hunting and fishing. We have seen the Department refine the development of their products and the servicing of their customers. These same customers are very often visitors, possibly to the state, possibly just from one community to the other.

The Department has supported the Division of Travel & Tourism in marketing efforts, cooperated in advertising programs of the Travel Industry, supported events of the travel industry, provided speakers for TIAK events and participated in the Board activities of TIAK. When issues of concern have arisen that affected both groups, we generally have been able to work through those to everyone's satisfaction. The lines of communication have certainly been open.

This cooperation and communication did not happen over night but has progressed within the last ten years. In 1991, the Department passed what I believe was the first Kansas Commercial Guide statutes, requiring permits of those who provided guide services for hunting or fishing in the state. The tourism industry viewed this as a step in the right

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direction toward increasing the hunting and fishing tourism to the state. We supported the effort. One year later, we had to come back to the Legislature and say, "this isn't working."

The problem was that regulations adopted by the Department after the law was passed were more comprehensive than had been anticipated. Instead of just applying for a permit, paying the \$50 fee, and completing a mail-in test as had been outlined by testimony given in Legislative hearings, the Department had added requirements for:

- first-aid and CPR training;
- in-office multi-section examination with minimum scores for each section;
- and extensive annual reporting requirements

Many of the people who had traditionally provided guide services were put off by these requirements. One year after the law was passed, we had no licensed commercial guides in roughly 2/3 of the state.

We came back to the Legislature with the issue and in 1992 the Legislature passed the 'Provisional' guides portion of the statutes. For persons who earned less than \$500 per year for guide services, registration with the department was the extent of the requirements.

TIAK has a fairly extensive grass roots network extending across the state. We have members in every major city, most small cities and many small towns. Since the law change in 1992, we have had little adverse feedback from the Commercial Guide and Provisional Guide permit requirements. Our small towns in Western Kansas again had guide service available for visitors at all levels, and commercial guide service was becoming a growing industry.

It seems that remains the case and with the trophy deer and other outstanding wildlife in this state, Commercial Guide Servicing is becoming a bigger and bigger industry. That pleases us. We are proud of the joint efforts made by the State and local communities to build on that tourism business. But as the Commercial Guide business becomes BIG business, requiring increased permit fees, we believe that is all the more justification for leaving the very small operator alone.

We do not doubt the Department when they say they need stiffer requirements for revocation of licenses. We just simply have not seen nor heard from our 'grass roots' that the problem is with the provisional guides.

We have heard you say more than once, "What problem is it we are trying to fix with this Legislation," and we believe you will find that eliminating the provisional guide language is not the answer to the problem.

We respectfully request that HB-2098 be amended to restore the provisional guide language.