



To: Chairman Billinger and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
From: City Manager, Nickolaus J. Hernandez, and the City of Dodge City Commission
Date: February 5, 2025
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 86

Chairman Billinger and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee
Thank you for your consideration of our testimony on behalf of the City of Dodge City in support of Senate Bill No. 86.

The City of Dodge City's Legislative Policy has consistently supported preserving existing passenger rail service. The Heartland Flyer Extension would greatly benefit and enhance the existing long-distance passenger rail service throughout the state by opening new destinations and markets for communities, like Dodge City that already enjoy the benefit of Southwest Chief.

The State of Kansas has a long history of partnering with neighboring state transportation departments in planning, funding, and constructing freight and passenger rail investments. The groundwork for a complete Heartland Flyer corridor from Dallas to Kansas City has been laid by work done in Texas and Oklahoma. The time is right for Kansas to commit to annual funding for this project and leverage the federal engineering and construction funds available in the Corridor ID Development Program of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Connecting the Heartland Flyer in Newton not only benefits south central and eastern Kansas, but southwest Kansas as well.

It is for all the reasons above that the City of Dodge City strongly urges your support of SB 86. Your consideration of our testimony and your support of SB 86 is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nickolaus J. Hernandez". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "N" and "H".

Nickolaus J. Hernandez
City Manager

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Reinert". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "J" and "R".

Jeff Reinert
Mayor