

As Amended by House Committee

As Amended by Senate Committee

Session of 2026

SENATE BILL No. 353

By Committee on Federal and State Affairs

1-21

1 AN ACT designating the official Kansas railroad hall of fame for the
2 purpose of celebrating the rich railroad heritage of Kansas and the
3 Kansans who were and are leaders in such industry; setting the location
4 of such hall of fame at the great plains transportation museum in
5 Wichita; establishing the Kansas railroad hall of fame selection
6 committee; prescribing powers and duties of the committee.
7

8 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

9 Section 1. (a) The legislature finds that the state of Kansas, during the
10 latter half of the 19th century, was a nexus for development of rail
11 transportation in the new frontier of the west. The growth of
12 transcontinental routes, as well as secondary lines that served the cattle
13 and farming industries and delivered goods to the burgeoning new
14 communities across the state, left in their wake a rich heritage of rail travel
15 and shipment that constituted a pivotal part of Kansas history. Even today,
16 goods move through Kansas by rail at a high rate, and the railroad
17 transportation system continues to be an important part of the state
18 economy. Therefore, the legislature finds that there shall be established an
19 officially sanctioned Kansas railroad hall of fame to recognize the
20 important individuals who developed rail transportation in Kansas and
21 continue such endeavors today. The legislature further finds that the
22 location that would best serve this purpose is the great plains
23 transportation museum, located in Wichita, because the museum is
24 established with a focus on transportation and could provide benefits,
25 synergies and facilities helpful to establishing and ensuring the success of
26 the Kansas railroad hall of fame.

27 (b) The great plains transportation museum, located in Wichita, is
28 hereby designated as the official site of and repository for the Kansas
29 railroad hall of fame.

30 (c) The management of the Kansas railroad hall of fame located at the
31 great plains transportation museum is vested in the Kansas railroad hall of
32 fame selection committee established pursuant to section 2, and
33 amendments thereto.

34 (d) The provisions of sections 1 through 4, and amendments thereto,

1 shall be known and may be cited as the Kansas railroad hall of fame act.

2 Sec. 2. (a) There is hereby established the Kansas railroad hall of
3 fame selection committee composed of:

4 (1) The executive director of the great plains transportation museum,
5 who shall serve ex officio with all powers of an appointed member;

6 (2) the executive director of the state historical society, who shall
7 serve ex officio with all powers of an appointed member;

8 (3) two members who shall be initially appointed by the governor
9 from a list of at least five individuals nominated by the board of directors
10 of the great plains transportation museum. Such list shall be comprised of
11 current or former members of such board of directors. The term of a great
12 plains transportation museum board member appointed to the selection
13 committee shall be for the period of such individual's membership on such
14 museum board of directors. The term of a former board member shall be
15 four years. All subsequent appointments and any vacancy in office of a
16 member of the selection committee appointed pursuant to this paragraph
17 shall be filled by the governor by appointment from a list of at least three
18 individuals nominated by the board of directors of the great plains
19 transportation museum who meet the requirements as described by this
20 paragraph;

21 (4) one representative of the railroad industry to be appointed by the
22 governor for a term of two years; ~~and~~

23 (5) two representatives of the public who are or have been employed
24 in the railroad industry as described by section 3(a)(1)(A) or (B), and
25 amendments thereto; ~~to be appointed by the governor. Of such~~
26 **representatives of the public, one representative shall be appointed by**
27 **the president of the senate and one representative shall be appointed**
28 **by the speaker of the house of representatives. Both appointments**
29 **shall be for a term of two years;**

30 (6) **one member appointed by the sheet metal, air, rail and**
31 **transportation workers union, or any successor to such organization;**
32 **and**

33 (7) **one member appointed by the Kansas railroad association, or**
34 **any successor to such organization.**

35 (b) Upon the vacancy of office or expiration of the term of office of
36 any member who has been appointed, a successor shall be appointed in the
37 same manner as the original appointment, except as otherwise provided by
38 paragraph (a)(3). Vacancies in office of appointed members with an
39 unexpired term of years shall be filled by appointment for the unexpired
40 term of the member creating the vacancy. ~~The governor appointing~~
41 **authority may remove a member who was appointed by such**
42 **appointing authority at any time, and the resulting vacancy shall be**
43 **promptly filled as provided by this section. Appointed members may be**

1 reappointed but shall not serve more than two consecutive terms, including
2 any partial term.

3 (c) The Kansas railroad hall of fame selection committee shall
4 organize annually by electing one of the committee members as
5 chairperson, one as vice chairperson and one as treasurer. Meetings of the
6 selection committee shall be held upon the call of the chairperson or may
7 be called by a majority of the selection committee. Meetings shall be open
8 to the public and shall be held at the facilities of the great plains
9 transportation museum, if possible, or in proximity to the Kansas railroad
10 hall of fame.

11 (d) Members of the Kansas railroad hall of fame selection committee
12 shall serve without compensation, except that members may receive
13 reimbursement for expenses incurred in attending meetings or performing
14 duties for the selection committee from available moneys.

15 (e) Decisions of the Kansas railroad hall of fame selection committee
16 shall be by the majority vote of all members. Members may participate and
17 vote remotely if such participation and vote is ascertainable by members of
18 the public physically present at the meeting.

19 Sec. 3. (a) The Kansas railroad hall of fame selection committee
20 established pursuant to section 2, and amendments thereto, ~~shall~~ **may**
21 annually select ~~two~~ individuals for induction into the Kansas railroad hall
22 of fame. The purpose of such selections shall be to honor those individuals
23 whose achievements in or for the Kansas railroad industry have brought
24 distinction to themselves and to the state of Kansas. A candidate for
25 induction into the Kansas railroad hall of fame shall have:

26 (1) (A) Worked within this state with an officially sanctioned railroad
27 operating within this state;

28 (B) worked within this state in the manufacture within this state of
29 railroad-related products, rail cars or locomotives; or

30 (C) been otherwise significantly involved in the railroad industry in
31 this state; and

32 (2) contributed significantly to rail service in Kansas or to the
33 preservation of the rail heritage of Kansas.

34 (b) Any member of the Kansas railroad hall of fame selection
35 committee or interested individual may nominate a candidate for
36 consideration by the selection committee for induction into the Kansas
37 railroad hall of fame. The selection committee shall prepare and make
38 available to the public a nomination form available in printed format or on
39 the website or webpage of the Kansas railroad hall of fame. The
40 nomination form shall include:

41 (1) Contact information pertaining to the nominee, including the
42 name, address, phone number and email address or, if the nominee is
43 deceased, the name and contact information of a relative or close personal

1 acquaintance of the nominee;

2 (2) information pertaining to the nominator, including the name,
3 address, phone number, email address and the nominator's relationship to
4 the nominee;

5 (3) a statement of approximately 1,000 words or more explaining
6 why the nominee should be a candidate for induction into the Kansas
7 railroad hall of fame, including how the nominee contributed to the Kansas
8 rail industry and meets the criteria of subsection (a)(1) and (a)(2) and why
9 such contribution is significant; and

10 (4) such other information as may be required by the selection
11 committee.

12 (c) The Kansas railroad hall of fame selection committee may
13 research or request additional information as the selection committee may
14 find helpful in determining whether to induct a candidate into the Kansas
15 railroad hall of fame. Information provided to or obtained and considered
16 by the selection committee for the purpose of reviewing candidates and
17 making a decision as to which candidates are to be inducted into the
18 Kansas railroad hall of fame may be made available to the public for the
19 purpose of informing the public regarding the basis of the committee's
20 decision and the accomplishments and contribution of candidates to the
21 railroad heritage of Kansas. The selection committee shall not be required
22 to disclose information or records, including, but not limited to, personally
23 identifiable information or other personal information provided on the
24 nomination form, that are not required to be disclosed by a public agency
25 pursuant to K.S.A. 45-221, and amendments thereto, or are protected
26 under any other applicable state or federal law.

27 (d) The Kansas railroad hall of fame selection committee:

28 (1) Shall provide for an appropriate location at the facilities of the
29 great plains transportation museum, if possible, or in close proximity to
30 such facilities for the display of any plaques, trophies, mementos, awards,
31 photographs, biographical or historical material or other information that
32 may come into the committee's possession for the purpose of recognizing
33 the achievements of the individual Kansans inducted into the Kansas
34 railroad hall of fame. The selection committee shall also provide for the
35 appropriate display of such items or information at such location;

36 (2) may provide an outside display on a printed metal sign or signs
37 that may include photos of the inductees, abbreviated biographies of
38 inductees and information about the Kansas railroad hall of fame. The
39 display may be mounted on public property or a public right-of-way at a
40 suitable location, as determined by the selection committee in cooperation
41 with the Kansas department of transportation or local government
42 authorities. The Kansas department of transportation shall assist with the
43 siting and establishment of the display upon request by the selection

1 committee;

2 (3) shall establish a website or webpage for the Kansas railroad hall
3 of fame, which may be located on or linked with the website of the great
4 plains transportation museum;

5 (4) may solicit and accept gifts, grants, bequests, donations or
6 gratuities of money, services, real or personal property or rights from
7 individuals, businesses, organizations or any governmental source to be
8 used for the Kansas railroad hall of fame. Such moneys, property or
9 services shall be used for the purposes for which provided, including the
10 purchase of awards, outdoor or indoor displays, display or exhibit cases,
11 induction ceremonies, a website or webpage or such other purposes for the
12 Kansas railroad hall of fame that the selection committee may deem
13 appropriate. Such moneys and any fees received pursuant to section 4, and
14 amendments thereto, shall be deposited by the treasurer in a suitable
15 account of the Kansas railroad hall of fame at an appropriate financial
16 institution as determined by the selection committee. All expenditures
17 from such account shall be used for the purposes and intent of the Kansas
18 railroad hall of fame act and authorized by the majority vote of the
19 selection committee. Financial records of the selection committee shall be
20 maintained by the treasurer; and

21 (5) may enter into such agreements or contracts with public or private
22 entities or individuals to fulfill the duties and purposes of the selection
23 committee and the intent of this act, including, but not limited to,
24 agreements or contracts with the great plains transportation museum for
25 the use of facilities and other assistance and cooperation.

26 Sec. 4. (a) The Kansas railroad hall of fame selection committee shall
27 provide appropriate ceremonies to induct the individuals selected pursuant
28 to section 3, and amendments thereto, into the Kansas railroad hall of
29 fame. Such ceremonies shall be conducted at least annually on
30 approximately the same date at the facilities of the great plains
31 transportation museum, if possible, or in proximity to the Kansas railroad
32 hall of fame. Such ceremonies shall include appropriate awards and
33 certifications and may include food or entertainment.

34 (b) The selection committee may fix and charge fees for attendance at
35 ceremonies described by subsection (a) to recover all or a part of the
36 expenses of the ceremonies or other expenses of the Kansas railroad hall
37 of fame. Such fees shall be deposited and expended by the selection
38 committee pursuant to section 3, and amendments thereto.

39 Sec. 5. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its
40 publication in the statute book.