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Deb Miller, Secretary

Kansas Department of Transportation

Sam Brownback, Governor

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE**

**REGARDING SENATE BILL 7
RELATING TO DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE**

January 19, 2011

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Senate Bill 7, related to changes in the DUI statutes.

While overall crashes and fatalities in Kansas have been declining in recent years, it is important to note that the number of alcohol-related crashes and fatalities have been increasing. KDOT feels that it is imperative that we address the issue of drunk driving in order to protect Kansas drivers.

KDOT receives federal grants to fund programs designed to try to reduce the incidence of drunk driving in Kansas and the devastating effects of alcohol-related crashes. We pride ourselves in using these funds to have the greatest impact on reducing the number of Kansans that choose to drink and drive.

Legislation was passed in 2009 that created the Kansas DUI Commission to study DUI issues in Kansas. The Commission included representation from numerous disciplines which included KDOT. We fully support strengthening DUI laws and programs in Kansas in an attempt to reduce drunk driving.

The best ways to reduce death and injury related to drunk driving is to have strong laws that discourage drunk driving coupled with severe penalties for those that do choose to drive drunk. Kansas must also have effective programs that provide opportunities for assessing and treating those who do not want to repeat the mistake of driving drunk in order to have the most profound impact on reducing the number of drunk drivers on Kansas roads.

While no legislation can completely eradicate driving while intoxicated, we believe this bill is an essential step in the right direction for Kansas. If enacted, this legislation will provide the necessary punishment to those who continue to break the law and drive drunk.

Senate Judiciary
1-26-11
Attachment 7