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To: Senator Dwayne Umbarger, Chairman, Committee on Transportation
From: Donna Shelite, Director of Vehicles, Kansas Department of Revenue
Date: January 31st, 2012
Subject: Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 334 (2012)

Good Morning Mister Chairman and Members of the Committee. My name is Donna Shelite and I am the Director of Vehicles for the State of Kansas. I am here today in support of Senate Bill 334 (2012).

Senate Bill 334 would make it easier for Military Veterans to return to Kansas and successfully enter the State's work force by crediting a veteran's experience operating commercial motor vehicles during his or her military service towards Federal and State skills testing requirements. The Bill is relatively short and is targeted at expanding the Division's ability to rely upon an applicant's specialized military experience to satisfy State CDL skills testing requirements. The authority to rely on an applicant's military experience is permitted by the Federal rules and SB 334 would expand that authority to State commercial driver's license eligibility requirements by amending K.S.A. 2010 Supp. 8-2,133.

The skills drive test for commercial class driver's licenses varies significantly from the regular motor vehicle drive test. First, the skills test requires the applicant have a commercial motor vehicle on hand to initiate the commercial driver's licensing test. Second, the CDL skills test requires a number of vehicle backing exercises and lengthy over the road observation by a Division examiner. Passage of Senate Bill 334 would not only assist a Military veteran's transition back into the private sector, but will also reduce the time commitment required by such skills testing for driver's license examiners – that would have a positive effect on reducing lines at Division exam stations specializing in commercial class license testing and issuance.

Passage of SB 334 (2012) will also assist the State's trucking operations in finding skilled drivers with the requisite commercial driver's license status.