

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gary Hayzlett at 1:30 P.M. on February 15, 2007 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Hank Avila, Kansas Legislative Research  
Bruce Kinzie, Revisor of Statutes Office  
Betty Boaz, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative William Otto  
Paul Finney, Humboldt, KS  
Ken Gudenkauf, Legislative Liaison, KDOT  
Representative Tom Burroughs  
Jim Hanni, Executive Vice-President, AAA Allied Group  
Dr. Robert Foss, Director, Center for the Study of Young Drivers, University of North Carolina  
Deb Miller, Secretary, Kansas Department of Transportation  
Mike Watson, Director, Riley County Police Department  
Dr. Howard Rodenberg, Director, Division of Health, Dept. of Health and Environment

Others attending:

See attached list.

Chairman Hayzlett opened the Committee meeting by opening the hearing on **HB 2290**.

### **HB 2290 - Highway advertising control act**

Chairman Hayzlett introduced Representative William Otto as the first proponent. (Attachment #1) Representative Otto asked several rhetorical questions such as, "What do you do when the highway once went through your town then the state moves the road?" He said you are forced to have your business moved out of town along the new road before you can put up a billboard telling people what is offered in your community. Representative Otto urged the Committee to favorably pass **HB 2290**.

The next proponent was Paul Finney. (Attachment #2) Mr. Finney said that originally highway 169 went through the center of Humboldt and they had a thriving community. He said today Humboldt is economically devastated because KDOT re-routed US 169 around Humboldt. Mr. Finney said in addition to being bypassed, Lady Bird's anti-billboard law of the 1960s compounded the damage. Mr. Finney said last year SB 253 contained an escape clause for spot zoning. He said that a KDOT staff attorney, however, disputed it's meaning. He concluded by saying this bill will treat everyone the same across the state.

The only opponent to **HB 2290**, Ken Gudenkauf, Legislative Liaison for KDOT (Attachment #3) testified that this bill would allow outdoor advertising structures erected by local zoning authorities prior to July 30, 2006 (as a result of "spot zoning") to be considered legal conforming signs. Mr. Gudenkauf said that if the proposed legislation were to be enacted, it would amend the Highway Advertising Control Act in a way that would contradict federal law and KDOT would be subject to a 10 percent reduction of federal funding for several highway programs.

There being no other proponents or opponents, Chairman Hayzlett closed the hearing on **HB 2290**.

The Chairman opened hearings on **HB 2400**.

### **HB 2400 - Drivers' licenses, age requirements**

The first proponent was Representative Tom Burroughs. (Attachment #4) According to Representative Burroughs **HB 2400** concerns the adoption of a Graduated Drivers License program which will save lives and make the roads of Kansas safer for drivers both youth and senior. He concluded by saying that this bill is a reasonable and responsible change to an irresponsible and outdated law and that we must provide our teen-

## CONTINUATION SHEET

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children with protective restrictions.

The next proponent was James R. Hanni, Executive Vice-President, AAA Allied Group. (Attachment #5) He said AAA supports changes to the current licensing system in **HB 2400**, recommended by the task force called the "Driving Force". He said the changes will help teens maximize the experience they need and minimize the risks to their safety by reducing the number of car crashes, injuries and deaths. Mr. Hanni concluded by saying that because so many other states have enacted true GDL systems, there is plenty of evidence that GDL as proposed clearly works to reduce novice driver car crashes significantly. GDL Systems, like what is proposed for Kansas, produce 20-25% reductions in daytime crashes and 47-52% reductions in nighttime crashes.

Dr. Robert Foss, Director, Center for the Study of Young Drivers, University of North Carolina was the next proponent. (Attachment #6) According to Dr. Foss he and colleagues recently completed a report for the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies of Science and the conclusion of that report is that, by far, the most important and effective thing that states can do to protect young drivers, as well as everyone sharing the road with them, is to enact a comprehensive graduated driver licensing system. He said the proposed legislation proposes that protective restrictions last only for the first six months of unsupervised driving. Dr. Foss said that crash risks are very high during the initial months of unsupervised driving, but decline fairly rapidly in the initial six months, followed by a much slower continuing decline for the next few years. He concluded by saying in their interviews and discussions with several thousand families, parents repeatedly comment that holding teens to the protective restrictions that parents sense are appropriate is much easier for them to do when the state has incorporated them in its driver licensing system.

Chairman Hayzlett introduced Deb Miller, Secretary of the Kansas Department of Transportation. (Attachment #7) According to Secretary Miller, **HB 2400** is an act relating to age requirements and limitations on driver's licenses and that this legislation was one of the many recommendations from the "Driving Force" task force which studied ways to reduce fatalities and injuries on Kansas roadways. She said motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death and serious injury for teenagers in Kansas as well as the United States. Secretary Miller said two of the riskiest situations for young drivers to encounter are nighttime driving and driving with other teenage passengers in the vehicle. She said the current system does not provide enough supervised driving experience for young drivers, and it does not protect them from some of the riskiest driving situations and that in order to best prepare our young citizens for a lifetime of safe driving, our licensing system must be changed to afford increased learning experiences in less risky situations.

The next proponent for **HB 2400** was Mike Watson, Director, Riley County Police Department. (Attachment #8) According to Mr. Watson, a graduated driver's license program would be a proactive measure to counteract the high crash rates among teens in Kansas and across the country. He said other states that have gone to GDL programs have seen positive results in lives saved through a comprehensive GDL program and that implementing a GDL program in Kansas is one way for law enforcement officers and lawmakers to work together to protect and serve the public.

The last proponent was Dr. Howard Rodenberg, Director, Division of Health. (Attachment #9) According to Dr. Rodenberg, Kansas statistics show that while teen drivers ages 15 - 18 account for only 6.7% of all Kansas registered drivers, they represent 20.1% of all crashes. He said according to the Kansas Department of Transportation, drivers ages 14 through 19 were involved in 17,978 crashes in 2004 for an estimated cost of \$653,832,300. He said the states who have responded to the national priority of protecting young drivers by raising their minimum driving ages and implementing GDL programs are experiencing the pay off. Dr. Rodenberg said, for example, after North Carolina adopted a three-phase licensing system, which included nighttime restrictions, the number of 16 year olds involved in motor vehicle crashes dropped 23 percent and the number of fatal collisions was cut in half. He said there was a similar pattern in California.

The Chairman asked if there were any additional proponents or any opponents. No one came forward. Chairman Hayzlett drew the Committee's attention to nine letter of written testimony in support of **HB 2400** and one letter of written testimony in opposition to this bill. After all questions from the Committee were answered, the Chairman closed the hearing on **HB 2400**.

Chairman Hayzlett advised the Committee that they would be working bills on Monday and Tuesday.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Transportation Committee at 1:30 P.M. on February 15, 2007 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

There being no further business before the Committee the Chairman adjourned the meeting. The next meeting will be on February 19, 2007, at 1:30 p.m., in Room 519-S.