Testimony

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HB 2168
Kansas Expanded Lottery Act Changes

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House Federal and State Affairs Committee

The Unified Government opposes House Bill 2168.

House Bill 2168 changes the fundamental financial landscape of the gaming law in an effort to get The Woodlands, Wichita Greyhound Park and Camptown Racetracks re-opened. It is unfair to the Boot Hill Casino in Dodge City, the Kansas Star Casino in Mulvane and the Hollywood Casino at Kansas Speedway to change the rules at this point in the game.

The Hollywood Casino at Kansas Speedway brings much more than gambling revenues. It brought a second Sprint Cup NASCAR race to Kansas every year; it has constructed a Grand-Am road course for sports car racing. It did those things based on the rules as approved in SB 66 in 2007. From investment levels to the number of slot machines allowed, HB 2168 restructures the entire gaming landscape in a way which puts the destination casinos at a competitive disadvantage after they've made the initial investments.

Reopening the gaming law also opens the door to other possible changes which could be detrimental to the Unified Government and other local governments and to development agreements negotiated between the Unified Government and Hollywood Casino.

It's interesting that when the expanded gaming law was passed, Governor Kathleen Sebelius held one of the bill signing ceremonies at The Woodlands. Hundreds of people showed up cheering and excited. The owners said the addition of slot machines would save the track. The racing industry was involved in the writing and passage of the expanded gaming act in 2007. If the percentages wouldn't work, why did they agree to them?

The Unified Government supports The Woodlands re-opening with a full slate of greyhound and horse racing and slots under the terms of the current law. It cannot support unfair changes in the rules.