



Travel Industry Association of Kansas

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Testimony in Opposition to HB 2188
Presented to the House Judiciary Committee
by Natalie S. Bright
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Chairman Kinzer and honorable committee members,

I am appearing on behalf of the Travel Industry Association of Kansas (TIAK), which is the unified voice speaking on behalf of the travel industry in the state of Kansas. Our organization has over 150 members representing and promoting communities all over Kansas. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you and to express our concerns with HB 2188.

As introduced, HB 2188 proposes to require any non-profit entity receiving \$350/year or more in public funds to document all income and expenditures of those public dollars by:

- Income amount received
- Check number, expenditure dates and expenditure amounts itemized
- Payee names and Description of the nature of each expenditure item

In addition, the bill mandates the information be made available to anyone requesting such information, posted on the non-profit's website and on the website of the government entity that provided the funds. It must be in a downloadable and searchable format. If the non-profit does not segregate the funds from other funding, the entire accounting of its expenditures and receipts shall be provided as outlined above.

While proponents of this bill present it as a way to promote transparency and open records, the true impact of the bill is that it will have a significant costs not only in the amount of time and money it will take for the non-profit organizations to administer, but will put those charged with recruiting businesses and events to Kansas at a significant competitive disadvantage.

Specifically, HB 2188 would require TIAK members to openly share their strategies for attracting major conferences and events to Kansas. Cities that we compete with to secure local, regional and national conferences would have access to see exactly who we are targeting, how we are targeting them and any commitments that we have made to secure a group.

Consider if a city is competing with Oklahoma City, who is not subject to an open records act and are not required to post their ledger publically. Passage of HB 2188 would have Kansas communities handing over their game plan to Oklahoma City who could then pursue a conference that may not already be on their radar screen. They would be able to determine our meeting planners targeted for future opportunities. They would also learn how we are allocating our resources on specific tactics such as ad buys, sales blitz's and digital campaign. All of these competitive advantages would be lost and significantly hurt the travel industries ability to attract meetings, tradeshows and/or conferences.

The members of TIAK support transparency and open government, but not to the extent it disadvantages our efforts to grow our state's economy. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you. I will stand for questions.