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TO: Representative Heubert and Members of the House
Local Government Committee

FROM: Trudy Aron, Executive Director

RE: Opposition to HB 2089

Good afternoon Representative Heubert and members of the Committee. Thank you for allowing the American Institute of Architects to provide this testimony in opposition to HB 2089.

AIA Kansas is a statewide association of architects and intern architects. Most of our 680 members work in over 100 private practice architectural firms designing a variety of project types for both public and private clients. Our members are designing tomorrow's buildings today, aiming to meet the "triple bottom line" by designing buildings that are affordable, protect the health and safety of the building occupants, and that respect our environment.

HB 2089 proposes to provide localities to opt out of the environs provisions in the State Historic Preservation Statute. HB 2089 is unnecessary: the current statute already allows for local control. Local governments may choose to agree or disagree with the recommendation of the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) or by a Certified Local Government (CLG). The proposed language in the bill would create greater complexity and cost to the State, local communities, and property owners:

- This policy would make it necessary for the state to create a program to track individual localities as well as their adopted provisions for the protection of historic properties.
- Lack of protection for re-development of listed historic properties will likely drive investors to communities that do not opt-out.

In the last five years, the SHPO has given a recommendation of "no adverse effect" in over 90% of their environs reviews. The current State Historic Preservation Statute has done much to incentivize sustainable development, and it should be left intact. Construction is the largest driver of our economy and historic preservation related construction projects have been a major contributor to providing jobs, putting underused properties back into use (and on the tax rolls), and increasing heritage tourism by helping Kansas maintain its unique character.¹ We urge you to oppose HB 2089.

Thank you.

1. Rutgers University, Center for Urban Policy Research Study.
http://kpalliance.org/images/Kansas_Executive_Summary_for_Web.pdf