



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES  
*of Kansas*

Affiliated with:  
American Council of Engineering Companies  
Kansas Society of Professional Engineers  
National Society of Professional Engineers  
Professional Engineers in Private Practice

TESTIMONY

TO: HOUSE TAX COMMITTEE

FROM: RICK WORREL  
VICE PRESIDENT, AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES OF KANSAS  
(ACEC KANSAS)

RE: HB 2136

DATE: FEBRUARY 14, 2013

Chairman Carlson, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today. My name is Rick Worrel, and I am here in my capacity as Vice President of ACEC Kansas to speak in opposition to HB 2136. ACEC Kansas is the trade association representing private consulting engineering businesses in Kansas. I am also president of Affinis Corp, a small consulting engineering firm in Overland Park.

Transportation funding is critical to the state of Kansas for reasons of both economics and public welfare.

Infrastructure investment creates immediate jobs for professions like mine. As a small business owner, I have experienced the direct benefit of the TWORKS program and job creation. In 2012, my company began design of Highway 68 in Miami County from Louisburg west to Paola. A direct result of this project was a 10 percent increase in staff in 2012 and anticipated 15 percent increase in 2013. We also experienced a 120 percent increase in profit which was reinvested into technology and equipment upgrades. My business is a perfect example of infrastructure investment creating jobs and growing the economy.

Infrastructure investment also increases our state's competitiveness by allowing us to more efficiently and safely transport goods and materials. A solid infrastructure base is tremendously important to businesses when deciding where to locate. In infrastructure, a penny today is likely to make and/or save you a dollar tomorrow.

It is also a good investment to help protect the safety and needs of our citizens. Safer roads make for safer citizens. But please also reflect on the impact this has on the less fortunate. The T-Works program helps support rural airports, which are often critical in transporting injured Kansans in timely fashion. It helps create and maintain transit systems which can accommodate our disabled and senior citizens. The use of new technology funded under this program will allow us to upgrade things such as traffic signals and curb cuts to ensure that our most vulnerable citizens can continue to live and thrive in their communities.

HB 2136 also perpetuates another long standing problem with Kansas infrastructure, namely the promise of funds for infrastructure which are later withdrawn. I know many of you share this frustration, and may have even voted against infrastructure funding at one time or another because you felt it to be misleading to taxpayers when the money is so often swept away for other purposes. Nobody shares this frustration more than the members of ACEC Kansas. However, perpetuating the habit by adopting the massive raid on funds outlined in HB 2136 wouldn't just "wound" the T-Works program. It would kill it.

Finally, I want to point out that the TWORKS program was designed in the closest of consultation with Kansas businesses, communities, and local elected officials. KDOT went to enormous effort to make sure all voices were heard, and built a program that reflected the needs of Kansas citizens and communities. The Kansans that participated, and indeed all Kansans, have been promised a fantastic program that will grow the economy, create jobs and improve public safety. Please don't withdraw from that promise. I urge you to vote "no" on HB 2136.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today, and I would be happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.