

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Karin Brownlee at 8:30 a.m. on March 20, 2003 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Wagle, excused

Committee staff present: April Holman, Legislative Research
Mitch Rice, Revisor of Statutes
Sarah Samuelson, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Mike Taylor, City of Wichita
Larry Baer, League of Kansas Municipalities
Ed Wolverton, Wichita Downtown Development

Others attending: See attached list.

The meeting began with the approval of past committee minutes. Senator Emler moved to approve the minutes from February 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, March 5, 6, and 7. Senator Bunten seconded. The motion carried.

Chairperson Brownlee opened the hearing on HB 2208. Mike Taylor, City of Wichita, testified as a proponent to the bill. (Attachment 1) He said that Wichita is doing a lot to develop and attract business, and he welcomes the state partnership. This bill would help Wichita continue to improve its downtown area. The Wichita WaterWalk is an exciting new project that will help create jobs and attract tourists and would benefit from this bill.

Larry Baer, League of Kansas Municipalities, testified in support of HB 2208. (Attachment 2) This legislation would encourage major economic development or redevelopment projects with regional or statewide importance. Starbonds and TIF laws have proven to be very effective vehicles to help attract and grow the economy.

Ed Wolverton, Wichita Downtown Development, testified in support of the bill. (Attachment 3) Starbonds would be a critical tool in Sedgwick County to support business development efforts. Starbonds do not raise taxes, do not create any "out of pocket" costs to the state, and they spur economic activity. Mr. Wolverton brought with him a number of written testimonies in support of the bill:

Lori Usher, Wichita Area Chamber of Commerce (Attachment 4)
John Rolfe, Greater Wichita Convention and Visitors Bureau (Attachment 5)
Cliff R. Sones, Wichita Independent Business Association (Attachment 6)
Ray Rancuret, Delano Neighborhood Association (Attachment 7)

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Written proponent testimony was also provided by Don Seifert, City of Olathe. (Attachment 8)

The committee discussed the bill and asked questions of the proponents. The committee discussed the existing properties within the proposed Starbond areas, the benefits of the project to the entire state, contributions from Wichita and Sedgwick County, and environmental cleanup that has occurred on the property previously.

There were no opponents or neutral parties wishing to testify. Chairperson Brownlee closed the hearing on HB 2208. She announced that the committee will work this bill tomorrow, depending on what the House does with SB 235.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2003, at 8:30 a.m. in Room 123-S.