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February 29, 2016

Honorable Representative Mark Hutton
Chairman, Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee
Room 521-E
Capitol Building
300 SW 10th Avenue
Topeka, KS 66612

Re: HB 2665

Dear Representative Hutton;

On behalf of the Heart of America Chapter of the International Code Council, the association representing Kansas building inspection professionals, I am writing to voice opposition to the passage of HB 2665. We are opposed to this bill because it will eliminate the ability of jurisdictions to make sure residential rental units meet minimum safety requirements, through proactive inspection programs.

Virtually every study of socioeconomic characteristics has shown that lower levels of income are tied directly or indirectly to an increased risk of fire and so renters are recognized to be a group at greatest risk. This circumstance, coupled with the fact that renters are generally not responsible for repairs to and maintenance of electrical, mechanical, and fire alarm systems tells us that renters are the population group most vulnerable to death or injury in residential fires.

HB 2665 proposes to encumber enforcement of residential rental property regulations designed to protect these most vulnerable members of our communities. Instead of spotting life-safety violations before residents are hurt or property is lost, authorities will be forced to find violations after someone has been killed or property has been damaged.

Our association membership includes building inspection, fire prevention, code enforcement, and rental inspection personnel. We are committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of Kansas citizens by assuring that the buildings where we work, play, worship and live are safe. Rental inspection is the primary tool by which we protect our most vulnerable population. We urge you to Vote to prevent HB 2665 from becoming the law of Kansas.

Sincerely,

Greg Talkin
President
Heart of America Chapter, ICC



Representing building inspection professionals across the Great State of Kansas for 50 years