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February 29, 2016

The Honorable Mark Hutton
Kansas State House of Representatives
300 SW 10th Street
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Representative Hutton:

On behalf of The Downtown Shareholders of Kansas City, Kansas, Inc., I am writing to you to **oppose** the passage of HB 2665.

The Downtown Shareholders of Kansas City, Kansas (DTS-KCK) is a 501(c)(3) organization, registered with the Secretary of State of the State of Kansas, devoted to the redevelopment and revitalization of the urban core of Kansas City, Kansas. We are a membership-based organization, representing business and property owners in our service area. DTS-KCK also acts as the administrative and fiscal agent for the local Self-Supporting Municipal Improvement District (SSMID) as authorized by KSA 12-1794 et. seq., and established by the Unified Government ordinance 0-72-08.

Good housing stock is key to our work in economic development, as is true everywhere. Attractive, well-maintained, safe properties build neighborhoods, increase property values for all owners in the neighborhood, and contribute to the overall economic life of a city. Unsafe or ill-maintained properties are a hazard to residents, increase blight, drive down values for all owners, and drive economic development away from those neighborhoods. Allowing local governments to maintain minimal life safety and condition standards through ordinance and inspection programs is a net benefit to not only the local government, but to the state as a whole. Maintaining good, healthy housing stock is an anchor point for a solid economy and an incubator for growth.

Kansas City, Kansas has had a rental licensing and inspection ordinance for twenty years; it has been successful in stabilizing neighborhoods and improving the quality of life for not only renters, but for all residents of the city. Passage of this bill will restrict the ability of our local government to maintain a quality housing stock, destabilize property values in many neighborhoods, and hinder economic development efforts in Kansas City, Kansas.

In short, we encourage you to **not** pass this bill out of committee, and allow not only Kansas City, Kansas the ability to maintain a useful and successful program, but other cities around Kansas the same opportunity to maintain and improve their housing stock and property values through a thorough and fair rental licensing program.

Should you have any questions regarding this testimony, or our work in Kansas City, Kansas, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address listed below.

Sincerely,

Charles L. Schlittler, Director

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