



PUBLIC WORKS

6215 Tuttle Creek Blvd
Manhattan, Kansas 66503
Phone: 785-539-2981
Fax: 785-565-6286

February 3, 2015

Chairman Steve Huebert
Committee on Local Government
State Capitol, Room 281-N
Topeka, KS 66612

Re: H.B. 2164

Dear Chairman Huebert and Members of the Committee:

I am Riley County's Director of Public Works and County Engineer. Riley County supports H.B. 2164, but asks its increase to the competitive bid threshold be raised to \$25,000. This increase is supported by the Kansas Association of Counties.

Riley County currently administers the daily operation of 7 different sewer benefit districts. My department is assigned that task. My personal experience has been that typical repairs in a Riley County sewer benefit district often exceed \$1,000. But it is not practical to competitively bid the work required for such repair jobs. During a formal bid process, the sewer system may have to remain inoperable for several days. Most of Riley County's sewer districts operate without a backup system. So if a district's sole pump or blower breaks down, repairs must be made immediately to avoid potential discharges or sewage back up into a residence. Often only one or two local contractors are willing and/or able to supply and install the necessary replacement equipment. This is because a sole source equipment manufacturer must be used to maintain compatibility within a district's existing sewer system.

My experience with sewer benefit district repairs leads me to believe the current \$1,000 threshold requiring competitive bids is far too low to be practical. H.B. 2164's increase is far more reasonable. I would further ask it be amended to raise the bid threshold from \$15,000 to \$25,000. This increase would make the sewer benefit district statute consistent with the competitive bid statute governing repairs to county buildings, K.S.A. 19-214(a).

Thank you for allowing me to speak in support of H.B. 2164, with an amendment to \$25,000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Leon Hobson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Leon Hobson, P.E.
Director of Public Works

cc: Board of Riley County Commissioners