

STATE OF KANSAS

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CHAIR: EDUCATION
MEMBER: EDUCATION BUDGET SUB COMMITTEE
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Senator Ralph Ostmeyer
Senate Federal and State Affairs
State Capitol
Topeka, KS

March 17, 2015

RE: Abrams Proponent on SB278

Chairman Ostmeyer,

After debating weighty issues of funding, taxes, gun bills and so forth; some may think it frivolous to bring forth a bill regarding stone bridges.

I assure that it isn't.

The citizens of Cowley County have an Economic Development Council, and that council is all about trying to bring in new business, or find ways to help existing businesses.

Cowley County has 18 large laid up stone bridges, all of which were built prior to 1910. It's rather interesting. But I personally didn't think much about it, because I have seen the bridges since I was a kid, and to this day I drive over some of them when I go on farm calls.

It turns out that most counties in Kansas don't have any stone bridges, and those that do have a large laid up stone bridge have only 1. I understand that while Cowley has 18, the county next in line has only 7 such bridges.

Further, while I may have grown up around the bridges, apparently there is an interest in such bridges. There has been tour groups come through just to look at and examine the bridges.

We want to build on that interest. There are groups in Cowley that want to market Stone Bridge bus tours; there is a push to have a Stone Bridge Festival, as well as other marketing ideas.

We believe that a bill declaring Cowley County as the Stone Bridge Capital of Kansas would help in these endeavors.

Thank you for your time,

Sincerely,

Steve Abrams