

SENATE BILL NO. 262 - AN ACT authorizing the construction of a permanent statue honoring Dwight D. Eisenhower on the state capitol grounds.

Testimony in support by: Mr. Mack Teasley, Abilene, Kansas
Deputy Director, Eisenhower Presidential Library [1979-2005]
Executive Director, Eisenhower Foundation [2005-2013]

I am very pleased to speak in support of House consideration of Senate Bill No. 262, authorizing the construction and placement on capitol grounds of a statue in honor of Kansas' most famous native son, Dwight D. Eisenhower.

My professional career with the Eisenhower Presidential Library and Eisenhower Foundation extended some 34 years and during that time I witnessed first-hand the steady rise in stature of Dwight D. Eisenhower. Very recently, historians have placed Eisenhower 5th in the presidential rankings; an overdue recognition of his tremendous accomplishments. It should also be noted that Ike is one of the most admired American historical figures around the world.

The Kansas legislature is to be commended for its ongoing role in honoring Dwight Eisenhower. During the Eisenhower Centennial in 1990, Ike's October 14th birthday was designated by the legislature as a state holiday to be celebrated every year. Over the years, there have been special appropriations for the Eisenhower Museum galleries. Most recently, in honor of Eisenhower's 125th birthday in 2015, the legislature authorized the issue of the I LIKE IKE special license plate that may now be seen on vehicles across the state. The proposed Eisenhower statue on the capitol grounds would be a lasting way for the legislature to honor this great Kansan.

Now more than ever, Kansans and all Americans hold President and General Dwight D. Eisenhower in the highest esteem. He is recognized for strong leadership in war and peace. General Ike embodied the West Point creed of "Duty, Honor, Country." His character and values reflected his upbringing in the small Kansas town of Abilene.

The statue authorized by Senate Bill No. 262 would be a most worthy and fitting tribute to our Kansas hero. All future visitors to the capitol grounds, especially our younger citizens, will be inspired by Eisenhower's living embodiment of *Ad Astra per Aspera*. We all STILL LIKE IKE!