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Testimony to House Taxation Committee HB2382 (oral testimony)

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee,

I serve as County Commissioner in Pottawatomie Co. and was formerly County Commissioner in Ford County during the passage of the 1989 highway bill. As local elected officer, I support the 11 cent fuels tax and modification of funding distribution formula in order to be able to provide infrastructure safety and the economic benefits that are created by re-establishment of lost resources . By increase of fuels tax dedicated to transportation, needed resources can be generated at the pumps within months of approval.

OUR TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IS IN GROWING NEED OF MODERNIZATION. KANSAS RURAL ROADS HAVE HIGH RATES OF DEFICIENCIES AND HIGH FATALITY RATES RURAL TRANSPORTATION INVESTMENTS SUPPORT BOTH SAFETY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.

Counties and cities maintain 130,170 miles of road, which is 92% of the road mileage in Kansas, and carry 43% of all traffic but currently receive only 33.63% of the fuel tax. There are also 2,600 locally owned bridges that are currently classified as structurally deficient and need replacement. solid reason for the distribution formula adjustment in the bill.

The current distribution for state motor fuel tax is that 66.37% goes to the State Highway Fund and 33.63% goes to the Special City and County Highway Fund. This distribution recognized that fuel is consumed when driving on county roads and city streets, however counties and cities receive only 33.63% of fuel tax but 43% of vehicle miles are travelled on the local road system. In calendar year 2013 cities received \$59.9 million, and counties received \$79.4 million. That share has diminished greatly and currently over 100 previously identified projects are now postponed. The

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safety highways if the business of government and expected funding has been 'absconded' to finance state experiment and resulting deficit.

Highway programs made Kansas national economic star during the 2008 housing recession because largely due to the the Kansas transportation program, Kansas had continuing statewide employment. When the highways program was funded, the economic benefit in Kansas was dynamic. Highway monies were distributed beneficially across the state. Cities and counties and KDOT employed Kansas engineers, and contractors. Construction companies were engaged, fuel, asphalt sellers, and quarries as well as equipment companies, hotels and restaurants flourished. Cities and counties, as previously described, are obligated to build and maintain the majority of the Kansas transportation system including bridges, secondary and gravel roads.

In recent years the state has, with sweeping of highway funds, virtually eliminated financial supports to city and county roads, (while imposing a costly, onerous tax lid which compounds our ability to respond to local differences).

An example of impact: ; Pottawatomie county east of Manhattan is one of the fastest growing areas in the state, due to Ft. Riley, Kansas State, and NBAF. A blessing and a curse as, in order to provide necessary traffic access and safety on state highway 24 and Greenvally Road, (highway from Wamego to Manhattan), we had to commit to a 44% county match (\$2M) to much needed safety improvements to one major intersection on a **'deficient' state system**. At the same time, upon inquiry, the resource of KDOT multi year loan support was no longer available to our county. In comparison, twenty years ago when Ford Co-Dodge City built with the 1989 Economic Lifelines highway program, the south by- pass for the meat

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packing development, the required local competitive match for highways was 10-20% range.

Through research, will also note that KDOTs rubric for recently determining that Kansas state highways are 90%+ good, was developed in the 1980s prior to the Lifelines program. It assessed roads under a different kind of truck weights and road traffic numbers. The current evaluation rating from the Secretary of Transportation failed, to speak to the damage and cost of delayed maintenance. It costs multiple times more to rebuild a road from base if maintenance is not performed regularly.

Finally, for electric vehicles to share equitably, suggest an annual “ mileage traveled” report at the time of car tag purchase. A value can be developed for assessing ‘road cost’ share for those vehicles and collected periodically.

There is great employment benefit to a dynamic highway program ; fuel, concrete, and asphalt as inputs are still relatively inexpensive, and Kansas companies are competitively seeking projects. A 11 cent investment for safety, and protection for citizens demonstrates both statesmanship and stewardship.

Your support for a user based fuels tax, will be an enormously beneficial investment in Kansas, and I ask for your vote.

Thank you for this opportunity to present in the interest of local Kansas government and the financial collaboration on building highways for the citizens that needs to be reinstated.

I will be happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.