



To: Senate Committee on Commerce

FROM: The City of Olathe and Olathe Chamber

DATE: March 6, 2018

SUBJECT: Neutral Testimony SB 432

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The City of Olathe, along with the Chamber of Commerce, actively seeks and promotes job growth and economic investment in Kansas and responsibly uses available tools to compete for developments. We also acknowledge there is always opportunity to improve the process and support the legislature reviewing the program and looking for ways to strengthen the program and its economic impact in the state.

However, while the City agrees there are opportunities to enhance oversight in the process, it must be done reasonably and responsibly so as not to create bureaucratic obstacles that prevent successful development and implementation of the STAR Bonds program. The proposal to add the underwriting commission raises concerns that the review and approval process will be slowed down and could deter investors from coming to Kansas. Instead, the City recommends the legislature encourages through legislation that the Department of Commerce follow the criteria its specifically sets out in its own guidance for application for STAR Bonds. These principals represent the spirit and goals of what the STAR Bonds program was created to accomplish.

The City views the STAR Bonds program as an invaluable tool to secure the most significant projects for our state. These types of projects not only create jobs in Kansas, they attract visitors to our area and state who not only visit the STAR bond project area, but also stay in local hotels, dine at local restaurants and purchase a myriad of other items at local retailers. The City of Olathe respectfully request you considering alternatives to SB 432 and proceed without adding additional layers of approval.