

**Testimony of Chuck Ferguson
Before the Senate Transportation Committee
In Support of House Bill 2096
March 8, 2017**

The Kansas City Area Transportation Authority (KCATA) operates and manages public transportation systems in the Kansas City area and also performs immediate, short and long term transit planning for the region. Since 2015, the KCATA has managed Johnson County's transit system.

KCATA and Johnson County support HB 2096 and the opportunity to operate buses on the shoulder of highways in Wyandotte County as we have done very successfully in Johnson County.

After passage of the current language in 2010, Johnson County worked with KDOT to study the I-35 corridor, make minor structure changes, and install signage and lane markings. Shoulder operation is only used in designated areas of I-35 in Johnson County. Bus-on-shoulder service started in 2012 and has worked very well for riders with no noticeable disruption to automobile commuters.

As buses leave Johnson County and head to downtown Kansas City, Missouri, they must travel through about 3.6 miles of I-35 located in Wyandotte County. This stretch of highway is often very congested at rush hours and is the focus of this bill. Passing HB 2096 would allow buses to use the shoulder of I-35 in Wyandotte County, just as we have been doing in Johnson County.

Bus operators on the I-35 corridor go through enhanced training on how to safely utilize the shoulder. In addition, the current legislation limits when shoulders can be used and at what speed buses may travel. The combination of reasonable restrictions and appropriate training has made operations on the shoulder very safe. Since the program started in 2012, there have only been two non-injury, non-collision incidents. That's two incidents out of 13,432 miles driven on the shoulder.

Authorizing the use of the shoulder will reduce travel time for bus riders. Operators in Johnson County have demonstrated the ability to perform operations in a safe, efficient manner. KCATA asks for your support.

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