



KANSAS COOPERATIVE COUNCIL
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Date: March 20, 2018

To: Sen. Rob Olson
Senate Utilities Committee

From: Mandy Roe, Director of Member Services
Kansas Cooperative Council

RE: HB 2701: Broadband Task Force

Chairman Olson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 2701. The Kansas Cooperative Council represents all types of cooperatively structured businesses including agriculture marketing and supply, rural electric, telecom, credit unions, the farm credit system and risk management cooperatives. Co-ops differ from other businesses because they are member-owned and operate for the mutual benefit of members.

The Kansas Cooperative Council supports the establishment of a statewide broadband expansion task force in HB 2701 and the mission with which it is charged. This task force embodies several of the cooperative principles, which are the values that guide cooperative governance. First, Concern for Community - Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members. Assessing the broadband needs of Kansans will start a conversation that can positively impact our schools and businesses, while strengthening every Kansas community.

Secondly, Cooperation Among Cooperatives - Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures. A collaborative approach to addressing Kansas' broadband needs will help unify efforts to improve broadband.

The KCC supports the inclusion of members on the task force from both, the Kansas Electric Cooperatives and the Kansas Rural Independent Telephone Coalition. It is important that their unique perspective on broadband be part of the conversation.

On behalf of the Kansas Cooperative Council, thank you again for the opportunity to share our support for HB 2701. The KCC would respectfully request, that when the committee considers HB 2701 for action, you consider it favorably.

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