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Testimony of Patrick Fucik on behalf of Sprint Corporation
On Kansas HB 2701
Kansas Senate Utilities Committee
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Good morning Chairman Olson and members of the committee. My name is Patrick Fucik and I am the National Director of State Legislative Affairs for Sprint. Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on HB 2701. While Sprint is generally supportive of measures that encourage broadband expansion, Sprint is officially neutral on HB 2701 but can support the bill with a few minor changes.

First, with regard to the make-up of the task force, on Page 1, lines 29 – 30, the bill originally provided for “one member appointed by the cellular telecommunications industry association” or CTIA. The bill was incorrectly amended on the House Floor and is in error in its current form. Because CTIA represents a variety of companies including infrastructure providers in addition to wireless carriers, there is no guarantee that a wireless provider representative would be selected. I would suggest amending that provision (Section 1 (a) (9)) by deleting lines 29 and 30 on page 1 and inserting the following: “one member appointed by the cellular telecommunications industry association representing a wireless carrier.”

Second, with regard to Section 1 (e) (2), which provides for considering recent actions by the FCC relating to broadband services, I would suggest adding reference to “the Mobility Fund II” which is a fund similar to the Connect America Fund but that focuses specifically on wireless broadband deployment (Page 3, line 6).

Third and finally, with regard to the mission of the task force, it calls for identifying opportunities and potential funding sources to expand broadband, remove barriers that may hinder broadband deployment and “enable the creation and deployment of new advanced communication technologies.” Given the State’s current budget situation, it is unlikely that State General Fund revenues would be an available funding source and as a result, either existing funds like the Kansas Universal Service Fund (KUSF) or a new funding source would have to be identified. Whether using KUSF or another funding source, directing those funds to be used to “enable the creation and deployment of new advanced communication technologies” appears to be in direct conflict with what companies like Sprint strive to do every day. Using such funding to compete directly with the private sector does not appear to be useful part of the task force’s mission and I would suggest deleting that provision (delete lines 13 and 14 on Page 3).

I would like to close by reiterating that Sprint supports efforts to encourage broadband expansion in all states and stands ready to work with policy makers in Kansas on whatever course is determined to be the best path forward to encourage broadband deployment here in Kansas.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions.