

TESTIMONY
Written in Support of HB 2588
House Appropriations Committee

By Andy Sanchez, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, KS AFL-CIO
February 18, 2020

Thank you Chairman Waymaster, and members of the Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to share our support on this important issue that we consider vital to the economy and well-being of our state.

The Kansas AFL-CIO supports HB 2588 and our support is grounded in the principles of the hopes and aspirations of working people. Our organization, of some 75,000 members across Kansas are eager to work with government and business at every instance to promote economic development. Having a mechanism such as FORWARD Kansas being established here in HB 2588 is the means that brought many stakeholders to the table, including local communities across our state.

The Kansas AFL-CIO does not support Job Creation for the sake of creating jobs. We take pride in building things that make a contribution to the state and are worthwhile. We believe our workers, and most people in construction have an innate quality to improve upon the process of building or constructing. This same quality can be seen with the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) and how HB 2588 evolved.

FORWARD Kansas maintains the same transparency as previous plans, but Accountability is improved upon with the two-year rolling program. Preservation is being made a priority because this not only makes economic sense but aims at the very integrity of our system to continue to operate by moving goods to, from and through our state. Flexibility and Partnering at the local levels also makes sense, but HB 2588 goes a step further than previous strategic planning by allowing some flexibility. Modernization and Expansion, contained herein, is a good start at beginning to move Kansas FORWARD.

Again, what is most appealing, is similar to what is in our DNA, continuous improvement of a process. We trust KDOT's direction with the new program. It addresses adding value and safety, seeks to reduce errors and waste, and finally, aims to resolves issues. We know that KDOT and the stakeholders will plan for change when necessary, do the change, then check the pulse to see whether the change made any difference. We ask that you give your favorable support to HB 2588. Thank you.