



KANSAS
ASSOCIATION OF
COUNTIES

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**Testimony of the Kansas Association of Counties
To the Committee on Appropriations
Proponent Testimony for HB 2588, February 18, 2020**

Chair Waymaster and Members of the Committee-

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 2588 on behalf of the Kansas Association of Counties. HB 2588, the FORWARD transportation plan, is a comprehensive innovative plan that has been many months in the making. With over 2,000 Kansans providing input in a long and well thought out series of local consults, it truly represents the thoughts and needs of Kansas. There are many great aspects of this bill. Not only does it provide funding for roads and bridges, but it also provides funding to increase broadband accessibility in underserved parts of the State, increase and improve rail service, introduces new transportation technologies, creates a multimodal pedestrian program and helps bolster our Airport infrastructure - - all of which positively impact the local Counties, stimulate local development and revitalization, and creates a transportation system for the way Kansans want to live.

With that said, I wish to address just two aspects of the proposed legislation. First is the concept of the two-year rolling cycle of identifying and funding projects. A great improvement over the previous T-Works program. This new system allows local communities to continually identify, evaluate, plan for and fund sorely needed transportation projects on a biennial basis. This structure of program is highly responsive to local needs therefor local counties will be able to work on solving real problems in real time.

Second, I wish to express our overwhelming support for the proposed \$8,000,000 per county over a ten-year period-of-time. With the proposed \$800,000 per year per county to be spent on development, improvement, or maintenance of transportation systems for elderly persons, persons with disabilities and the general public, many of the States 142,000 miles of roads and 25,000 bridges would realize much needed improvements.

By approving HB 2588 and committing the resources needed to fund the FORWARD transportation plan – you will be sending a positive message to your constituents telling them that you care and want to see Kansas grow and flourish once again.

For these reasons the Kansas Association of Counties urge the panel to PASS HB 2588.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce A. Chladny".

Bruce A. Chladny
Executive Director