



February 17, 2020

TO: Committee on Commerce Labor and Economic Development

FROM: City of Olathe

Tim Danneberg

SUBJECT: Written Testimony in Support of HB 2529

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Growing the Kansas economy, creating jobs and drawing visitors to our state is an important foundation for our state's future. Tools such as STAR Bonds are fundamental to our success and competitiveness. While the City of Olathe does not have a STAR Bond project, the possibility of using this tool allows us to begin discussions on major projects that can have a long-term impact on the state.

Provisions in HB 2529 set out to improve the STAR Bond program by tightening the project application process and requiring more oversight by the Kansas Department of Commerce. Also, the addition of "major business facilities" affords new investment opportunities under the program and the City of Olathe aspires to attract these types of development in our community.

While the City of Olathe supports extending the sunset for another 5 years, we do ask lawmakers to consider making the program permanent. By doing so, businesses will be provided the stability they desire and will draw more projects and investment to Kansas. To assure the program provides the ROI sought, lawmakers can rely on an interim study every 5 years with a requirement that program adjustments be submitted to the legislature.

STAR Bonds are a powerful tool that, when used judiciously and responsibly, have a profound economic impact to Kansas communities. The City of Olathe respectfully request you pass HB 2529 and retain the successful STAR Bond program.