

Testimony to the House Taxation Committee
In support of HB2367
By Representative Rich Proehl, Co-Chairman of the Joint
Legislative Transportation Vision Task Force
March 13, 2019

Chairman Johnson and Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB2367.

The Joint Legislative Transportation Vision Task Force heard from many local officials, nearly 400 local input conferees in all, and at least 10 percent of them shared their challenges at finding sufficient moneys to address local transportation needs. They noted funding for county roads and bridges came 74 percent from local funds, 19 percent from the Special City and County Highway Fund, and 7 percent from federal funds, including the federal funds exchange program, and they discussed increasing costs for many things in their budgets, all squeezing moneys available for transportation needs. An example of those transportation needs is bridge replacement, as many bridges have exceeded their expected 50-year lifespans but are not capable of carrying the increased loads modern agriculture puts on them. Counties are responsible for 115,000 miles of roads and 18,050 bridges; cities are responsible for 17,000 miles and 1,250 bridges. Counties are replacing on average only 115 bridges a year; if that rate is continued, counties will be faced with closing about half of them over the next 50 years. Although some of those bridges can be replaced for \$150,000 each, the Kansas Association of Counties' local road engineer reported an average replacement value of \$417,000.

The League of Kansas Municipalities provided a brief history of the demand transfers, and those histories show a parallel with the Legislature's history of sales tax transfers to the State Highway Fund: make a promise, break that promise some years later and keep moneys for the State General Fund. Conferees pushing for finishing T-Works projects urged the State to keep its promises. This bill would take a step toward keeping promises to local governments and empowering them to choose and address their most pressing transportation needs.

Attached is an article on "The Impact of Demand Transfer Losses."

