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Written Testimony of Patrick Fucik on behalf of Sprint
On Kansas HB 2618
Kansas Senate Utilities Committee
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Chairman Masterson and members of the Senate Utilities Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 2618 which will help encourage broadband expansion in Kansas.

Specifically, HB 2618 would establish the State Broadband Deployment Grant Program to be administered by the Office of Broadband Development within the Department of Commerce (DOC). The purpose of the program would be to establish a competitive grant program to award grants to applicants seeking to expand access to broadband internet service in Kansas. Funding for the program would be subject to appropriation.

The Office of Broadband Development within the DOC would serve as the central office to lead a statewide effort to expand broadband coverage and capacity in Kansas. The Office would be required to work with cities and counties to promote the program and would serve as the central point of contact for cities and counties regarding the program. Applicants would submit an application for grant funding to the Office of Broadband Development in a procedure that would be established by the Office. The bill also outlines other criteria and requirements for the program.

HB 2618 was one of the recommendations that came out of the State Wide Broadband Expansion Planning Task Force created by legislation passed in 2018. I was a member of the Task Force representing wireless carriers and the Task Force met several times throughout 2019. The final report of the Task Force contains recommendations to the Legislature regarding broadband expansion, some of which are contained in provisions of HB 2618.

Sprint supports HB 2618 and encourages this committee to pass the bill to the full Senate.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.