



Testimony in Support of SB 375
Senate Ways and Means Committee
February 18, 2020

Chairwoman McGinn and members of the committee,

The Chamber of Lawrence, Kansas expresses its support for Senate Bill 375, a bill that enacts the Kansas Department of Transportation's FORWARD transportation program.

The FORWARD plan is a reasonable approach to balancing the demands for project funding across the state with budgetary restrictions. The plan also ensures the state highway plan is flexible enough to take into account changing needs in localities across Kansas.

While we are aware of the difficult choices state government has faced in recent years, we have strongly opposed the diversion of funds from the T-WORKS program. The diversion of monies from the state's highway fund has had a debilitating effect on KDOT's ability to keep up with growing demands for highway repair and construction. Governor Kelly's commitment to reduce these diversions now and end them over the next several years is appreciated. However, The Chamber maintains its call for an immediate end to these diversions.

The Chamber of Lawrence, Kansas represents almost 900 local businesses. We recognize the importance of a quality, well-maintained, comprehensive highway system, and are concerned with delays in previously approved projects, as well as regularly scheduled maintenance of highways and bridges throughout the state. The expansion of the west leg of the South Lawrence Trafficway (K10) from two to four lanes remains a top priority of The Chamber and the Lawrence community.

We look forward to working with Secretary Lorenz, KDOT staff, and our delegation to see the FORWARD plan implemented and, ultimately, the west leg of the South Lawrence Trafficway expanded.

Please support Senate Bill 375.

Respectfully,

Bonnie Lowe
President & CEO