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**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

REGARDING HOUSE BILL 2277

**RELATING TO THE EMPLOYEE AWARD AND RECOGNITION PROGRAM; AUTHORIZING HIRING,
RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION BONUSES; INCREASING THE LIMITATION ON SUCH AWARD OR
BONUS**

March 14, 2023

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) respectfully provides written testimony in support of House Bill 2277.

KDOT supports this bill as it provides an additional tool for recruiting and retaining staff. KDOT is currently in the third year of the Eisenhower Legacy Transportation (IKE) Program. As production has ramped up for the program, staffing levels have been steady or declining for several key positions necessary for delivering IKE. Having the ability to offer recruitment and retention bonuses would be very beneficial to KDOT.

KDOT's current staff count is approximately 2,150 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) and temporary positions which is down from approximately 2,250 in 2018. In addition, KDOT is actively working to fill 475 vacant positions. This means that today, 475 positions are either being posted or are in the interview and selection process of being filled. Not all open positions are in active recruitment status because when jobs become vacant, they are evaluated to confirm job needs to be filled or if the position can be redistributed within other jobs. Additionally, supervisors need to confirm when the best time is to fill the position as they will need to dedicate time for both interviewing and training a new employee.

The average annual turnover rate for KDOT since 2018 has been 20.5%. Practically, this means that as soon as we fill a position, one, and at times two, positions are being vacated. Although KDOT fills around 500 positions a year, we are barely keeping up with turnover. Keeping up with this turnover requires a tremendous amount of resources in terms of on-boarding, training, and exiting. Because retention and recruiting bonuses are shown to be practical and effective strategies for retaining individuals longer and being able to fill positions quicker, it will provide KDOT leverage to be able to cut down on both hours and cost KDOT is spending to backfill rolls and fill new roles.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2277.