

**To: House Committee on Commerce**

**From: Cole Haston, Elevator Mechanic**

**Re: In-Person Oral Opponent: HB2826**

**Date: March 19, 2024**

Chairman Tarwater and members of the Committee,

My name is Cole Haston, I am an Elevator Mechanic with 26 years of experience. I am also a member of the current Elevator Advisory Board; In that role I represent those who work on and inspect Elevators across the State. I thought it appropriate to wear my uniform since this is my day job. I not only have the credentials and training to install, repair, and maintain elevator equipment but also the credentials commonly required to inspect elevator equipment according to widely accepted ASME National Standards. I speak for mechanics and inspectors.

I am asking the Kansas Legislature for their help to do what it takes to keep the riding public safe. I come in opposition to HB 2826, because it deviates drastically from well-established national standards. I ask you to consider, when you get on an airplane or ride an amusement park ride, you have every expectation that the professionals in those associated industries are doing their job correctly to keep you safe. When something goes wrong, for example an airplane crashes, and someone is seriously hurt or killed, the General Public may tend to think of it as a tragedy. Professionals in the airline industry look at it from a distinct perspective, rather than viewing a tragedy as a fluke occurrence, they look at most of these situations as preventable, and begin to devise and implement plans to prevent the next occurrence. By reacting to one tragedy, you can be proactive to prevent the next one.

The ASME Code for elevators was first established over 100 years ago. It was born in a world where it was common for the elevator riding public to be fatally injured by this equipment. By deviating from National Standards, this would make Kansas complicit in future preventable injuries or death. While elevator/ escalator injuries are not a daily headline in the news, one does not have to look long on YouTube, to find news stories from around the nation. As an elevator mechanic, one of the most common things we are asked when we encounter the Public is "Is this elevator safe?" Imagine how preposterous it would be if I said "no" and then the waiting passenger told me that I was wrong.

I am perplexed that I am trusted to repair and maintain elevators but when I offer my input on how to keep the riding public safe, I am framed as a greedy industry insider who is only trying to profit from unethical business practices, and unnecessary tasks. The current Elevator Safety Act is not an extreme over-step by the government. It is a step in the right direction. While I am proud of our Wild West heritage in Kansas that does not mean I want that applied to our Building Codes.

I ask that you please trust the same people who install, repair, and maintain elevator and escalator equipment to offer sound advice to keep the riding public safe. I ask that you adhere as closely as possible to ASME.