



March 16, 2023

Senate Commerce Committee
Testimony in Support of HB 2344
Natalie Bright, Executive Director

Chair Erickson and members of the Committee:

The Travel Industry Association of Kansas (TIAK) is a member association comprised of tourism and travel professionals from across our State. The industry is an independent economic driver, which historically adds \$7.3 billion to the Kansas economy and sustains more than 94,000 jobs in the state. Thank you for the opportunity today to submit written testimony on behalf of the Travel Industry Association of Kansas (TIAK) in support of HB 2344.

HB 2344 proposes to expand the membership of the Council on Travel and Tourism by adding three seats to include a new representative from the Independent Venue Association, the Kansas Museums Association and the Kansas Sampler Foundation. Adding these additional members will provide more perspectives and interests from the tourism community and afford the Council more opportunities to assist the travel and tourism industry attract more visitors to Kansas.

In addition, the bill seeks to modify the percentages in the Attraction Development Grant program for tourism promotion by reducing the allocation of grants for public entities and removing the limitation on grant amounts to any single entity. The Attraction Development Grant program is a funding opportunity provided by the Division of Tourism to assist in the development of travel experiences that generate increased tourism and economic development. The proposed percentage changes better reflect the current tourism industry needs and will provide more flexibility in project awards and ultimately provide the best ROI.

Thank you for the opportunity submit comments and support for HB 2344. The members of TIAK respectfully as you pass the bill out favorably.