



TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 2026

February 12, 2019

Chairman Tarwater and members of the House Commerce Labor and Economic Development Committee, I'm submitting this written testimony on behalf of the **Building Owners and Managers Association of Greater KC (BOMA)**, the **Construction Users Council of Greater KC (CUC)**, and more generally the development community at large.

As a practical matter, when one considers the full array of integrated building components, automatic sprinkler systems get high marks for reliability. That said, **HB 2026** raises a number of legitimate concerns with respect to a rationale leading to seemingly unjustified added regulation, as well as an associated adverse cost impact on the automatic sprinkler service industry.

While we have experienced several years of strong commercial construction demand, there are current indications that we can expect to see a slowing in this activity in the not too distant future. Regardless of construction industry sector, commercial, industrial or residential, unwarranted new licensing and inspection requirements are never enacted in a vacuum; and new "user fee" impositions will undoubtedly ripple through an already rapidly accelerating construction pricing environment.

In addition to a potentially significant construction delivery cost impact, **HB 2026** could effectively discourage investment in Kansas as the result of adding another tier of unnecessary fire sprinkler regulatory enforcement bureaucracy that is already effectively addressed by building codes jurisdictions throughout the state.

Yet another consideration revolves around qualified workforce shortages everywhere, not just in the state of Kansas. **HB 2026** provides for a highly restrictive employment screening criteria that will put many Kansas companies at a severe regional competitive disadvantage. The provision for criminal background screening alone will likely run afoul of the EEOC, which prohibits employment disqualification based solely on a prior criminal conviction.

In that the Kansas fire sprinkler industry hasn't demonstrated a sufficient need to require additional regulation exceeding that which is already in force, and for the specific economic reasons we have set forth, both **BOMA** and **CUC** respectfully oppose the adoption of **HB 2026**.

Respectfully,

BUILDING & MANAGERS ASSOCIATION of GREATER KC
CONSTRUCTION USERS COUNCIL of GREATER KC


Sam Alpert (816)678-8723

SVA/sva