

To: House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

From: Kendal Francis, City Administrator, Great Bend, Kansas

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 2314

Date: Friday, February 22, 2019

Dear Chairman Tarwater:

I am writing to give the City of Great Bend's full support to HB 2314.

Abandoned and blighted property is an issue that creates a significantly negative impact on all Kansas cities for a variety of reasons. Abandoned structures erode property values for adjacent landowners as they fall into disrepair thus creating a blighting effect on the surrounding properties. They create dangerous conditions for public safety officers as they frequently attract vandals and squatters, and are often target areas for drug users. In addition, these properties lead to an increase in fire calls as a result of accidental fires and arson. Abandoned properties often result in unpaid property taxes, which in turn creates a higher tax burden on other property owners.

Cities have tools available to them to address issues when a dangerous structure is involved but have limited resources to deal with abandoned property. This legislation would significantly aid cities in their efforts to address abandoned and blighted real estate, by allowing rehabilitation action to be taken before the property becomes a "dangerous structure". Therefore, I respectfully urge you to fully support HB 2314.

Sincerely,



Kendal Francis

City Administrator