

Kansas Good Roads, Inc.

TO: Chairman Marc Rhoads and Members of the House Appropriations Committee
FROM: Whitney Damron
RE: Senate Substitute for HB 2149 – The Engineering Growth Initiative
DATE: April 27, 2011

Chairman Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Kansas Good Roads, we respectfully ask the Committee to support Senate Substitute for HB 2149 in order to advance educational opportunities for engineering students in our state.

The state of Kansas and its citizens rely on qualified engineers, whether for highway and public works projects to aircraft workers and virtually anything in between. As the state and our country transition out of a devastating recession, engineers and their creative minds will lead the way through increased productivity, design work and business opportunities for our Kansas employers.

HB 2149 creates the framework for a unique partnership of non-state general fund dollars, leveraged with both private-sector investment and additional funds raised by the participating universities. State funding is appropriately drawn from the Expanded Lottery Act Revenue Funds (ELARF).

HB 2149 includes both geographic and educational diversity – the University of Kansas, Kansas State University and Wichita State University are all three a part of this initiative and the opportunities created for engineering students are not limited to specific fields of engineering, but rather applicable to all facets of the profession. The participating universities would work with private industry and the Board of Regents to insure goals of the program are met and the state maximizes the benefits of this program.

Kansas Good Roads and its members are the beneficiaries of the work product of many engineering professionals for road and infrastructure projects. Engineers touch everyone's lives, make us safer, more efficient and are vital to our state's ability to achieve its economic development potential.

HB 2149 will help our state recruit, develop and educate professionals that will transition into productive, high-paying jobs that will have a positive impact on our state far in excess of the cost of implanting this legislation. This kind of participation can serve as a model for future initiatives as well.

On behalf of Kansas Good Roads, Inc., we ask for your favorable consideration of HB 2149.

Thank you.

Kansas Good Roads, Inc.

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An association created to promote good roads in Kansas for all, by those who build them for people who use them.

Appropriations Committee

Date April 28, 2011

Attachment 8