

**TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**REGARDING HB 2644 – AMENDMENT TO K.S.A. 8-1909
CONCERNING OVERWEIGHT EXCEPTION FOR HAULERS OF CERTAIN
AGRICULTURAL GOODS**

February 17, 2016

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony regarding House Bill 2644. The proposed legislation would amend K.S.A. 8-1909 by allowing vehicles, or a combination of vehicles, exclusively carrying grain or other seasonally harvested products during the normal harvest season from the field where they are harvested to storage, market or stockpile or from stockpile to market or factory up to 50 miles.

While KDOT has a neutral position on this bill as it applies to bridges and pavements on the state highway system, we would like to acknowledge that the increased weights will to some level accelerate pavement damage, and the result in increased maintenance costs, on both state system and local roads.

KDOT does not have enough data to determine the actual impacts to our bridges and pavements but would advise that under the bill as written there would be the need to evaluate all of our structures to determine what changes this might cause to the current number of bridges that KDOT posts for weight restrictions. KDOT has suggested in the past that for any increase in weight, an increase in number of axles would help to slow acceleration rate of damage or keep the pavement and bridge damage from increasing.

KDOT is also aware that local units of government have concerns regarding the increased weight limit, especially when it comes to bridge load ratings. These concerns are: many of the bridges under local jurisdiction may be able to handle the additional load in their current condition, but the heavier loads may accelerate the speed of deterioration of the structure; over one-half of all bridges on the local system are over 50 years old, which is either at or near the life expectancy of bridges built at that time; and accelerating the deterioration of bridge structures will put a strain on local budgets as they try to deal with more bridges becoming structurally deficient in a shorter timeframe.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide written testimony for HB 2644.