



February 5, 2018

TO: Rep. John Barker, Chair, House Federal and State Affairs Committee
FROM: Ron Keefover, President of the Kansas Sunshine Coalition for Open Government
RE: Written Testimony in Support of HB 2562

The Kansas Sunshine Coalition for Open Government urges the Committee's favorable report of this legislation as emblematic of the Legislature's recent efforts toward added transparency in your work. The Sunshine Coalition believes as aptly stated by the late Chief Justice Robert Miller in one of the Supreme Court's opinions addressing governmental accountability, people fear and mistrust the unknown and sunshine is the strongest antiseptic.

Making committee meetings accessible by video streaming technology will permit committees to offer their hard work and thoughtful deliberations for public consumption regardless of where the citizens may reside in the state. The Legislature indeed is the people's branch of government in that each member has been sent to do their work directly by the constituencies you represent. Your hard work and careful deliberation should be showcased for all Kansans to observe regardless of their distance from the Statehouse.

On a personal note, I can tell you that having implemented video streaming of your Supreme Court's hearings beginning 2012, the program has continued through the years without complaint or even significant cost or technical issues. The Court's system features two 3-chip cameras and a user friendly switcher in the courtroom that was installed for less than \$15,000, out the door. They are easily operated with little training required.

Finally, and just for the Committee's edification, the Sunshine Coalition for Open Government is a statewide coalition established in 2000. It includes representatives of like-minded non-profit organizations, journalism and law professors, members of the news media and other citizens committed to promoting open government in Kansas.

Due to a prior commitment to help judge the state "We the People" high school civics competition in Manhattan, I am unable to offer oral testimony on this bill today. However, I sincerely thank you for your consideration of our written testimony, and would be delighted to visit with any committee members who may have questions regarding this bill.