



**House Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications Committee
Testimony on HB 2806
February 29, 2024
Proponent – Megan Bottenberg, Director of Government Affairs**

Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Megan Bottenberg; I'm the Director of Government Affairs for Cox Communications in Kansas. Cox Communications is the largest broadband provider in Kansas. We contribute more than \$732.8 million to the Kansas economy each year, pay more than \$8.6 million a year in franchise fees in Kansas, and collect more than \$22 million in sales tax for state and local units of governments from customers. Cox is committed to expanding into rural and unserved areas in Kansas, which is why we serve 111 franchise communities in Kansas, having expanded to unserved areas the past several years.

Thank you to Ideatek and AT&T for working with us on this legislation. We appreciate their partnership. Service providers in the public, and in this particular case, county, right of way invest heavily in the state and should be treated fairly without undue and discriminatory fees and costs. Throughout Kansas and across the country, Cox has seen firsthand how different providers are treated by counties and cities. This legislation is the first step to ensuring providers have a level playing field in the public right of way between incumbent providers and new entrants who may seek or be given more favorable terms for accessing the public right of way.

All broadband providers should be treated the same in the public right of way, and we hope to pass legislation next year that allows the same fairness in the city right of ways. This legislation is a great example of partnership between service providers as we all have the same goal—deploying broadband to unserved areas of Kansas.

Thank you for your time and consideration.