

January 26, 2024

Transportation Committee: I am writing to you to request to speak in person as a proponent for **HB2498**.

My points include:

1. Leavenworth, the first city in Kansas settled in 1854, is the most historical city in the state. We were a key player in the border wars and in the forming of the state constitution. We were the jumping off point for pioneers who came up the Missouri River on steamboats, purchased oxen and wagons from the very large freighting firm of Russell, Majors, and Waddell and set out to the west on the Oregon or Santa Fe Trails. Lincoln gave his first campaign speech for the presidency here and John Wilkes Booth stood on the same stage as he acted in a Shakespearean drama. Buffalo Bill and Will Bill Hickok rode our streets along with many other famous and infamous people of the day. Leavenworth in 1859 was the largest city between St. Louis and San Francisco with over 10,000 people. We were the place to be.
2. The Leavenworth County Historical Society and Carroll Mansion Museum is a big draw for tourism in Leavenworth. We are always looking for ways to market who and where we are. A license plate traveling around the area and even out-of-state is a great, easy way to get people, interested in history, to visit us. Our location next to the largest metropolitan area in Kansas makes us an ideal one-day trip for a large number of tourists.
3. Our mission is to collect, preserve and share the history of Leavenworth, city and county. We take this duty very seriously as we stand on the shoulders of our ancestors and future generations will stand on ours. It is important that they know who we were and what we were thinking.
4. We collaborate with the other five museums in Leavenworth and Fort Leavenworth, the Chamber and the Convention Visitors Bureau in our celebration of Leavenworth History Day, April 27<sup>th</sup>. We are all working together to market Leavenworth and attract tourism to Leavenworth.
5. We receive no funds from the state, county, or city except through grants. This is a way to increase our funding for marketing our museums and Leavenworth businesses. It is a win/win for everyone in Leavenworth.

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