Testimony in Support of Kansas HB 2234
Sales Tax Exemption for Junction City Main Street

Chairman Smith and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for Kansas HB 2234 on behalf of Junction City Main Street. We respectfully request tax-exempt status to strengthen our ability to drive economic revitalization and improve safety in our downtown district.

Junction City Main Street operates on a lean annual budget of approximately $151,000. Although we are a nonprofit organization working for the public good, we currently pay about $8,000 each year in taxes. For an organization of our size, that amount is significant. It represents funds that could otherwise be reinvested directly into visible improvements and safety-focused projects in the district.

If granted tax-exempt status, every dollar saved would be immediately redirected into initiatives that strengthen our downtown's economic stability and physical condition. Our primary focus is expanding our facade matching grant program. These grants support exterior building improvements that enhance lighting, structural integrity, accessibility, and overall safety. Well-maintained storefronts create safer environments for residents and visitors while also encouraging business investment.

The impact of these funds multiplies quickly. A single $4,000 facade match typically leverages at least $8,000 in private investment. By awarding two $4,000 grants, we can generate approximately $16,000 in total reinvestment into downtown properties. These improvements help prevent deferred maintenance, increase property values, and create safer, more welcoming spaces for businesses and the public.

We also plan to invest in professional wayfinding signage that captures the attention of travelers and directs them into downtown. Turning pass-through traffic into local customers is essential for sustaining small businesses and increasing activity in the district.

The mission of Junction City Main Street is to ensure our downtown remains the heart of our community. Removing this $8,000 tax burden would not simply ease operational costs; it would act as a multiplier for reinvestment, safety improvements, and economic growth. Reduced vacancies, increased foot traffic, and stronger business performance follow when resources are reinvested locally.

We respectfully ask for your support in granting Kansas HB 2234so that Junction City can continue building a vibrant and safe downtown area for residents, businesses, and visitors.

Terry Butler, Mayor Junction City
Board President
Junction City Main Street