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MEMORANDUM

To: Chairman Francis and Members of the House Committee on Transportation
From: Office of Revisor of Statutes
Date: February 10, 2026
Subject: Bill Brief – HB 2607

House Bill 2607 designates the official Kansas railroad hall of fame and establishes the railroad hall of fame selection committee.

Section 1 provides that the provisions of HB 2607 shall be known as the Kansas railroad half of fame act. Section 1 provides certain findings and intent for designating a railroad hall of fame in Kansas to recognize important individuals who developed rail transportation in Kansas. This section also designates the Great Plains Transportation Museum, located in Wichita, as the official site of and repository for the Kansas railroad hall of fame. Finally, Section 1 provides that the management of the Kansas railroad hall of fame is the responsibility of the Kansas railroad hall of fame selection committee that is established in Section 2.

Section 2 establishes the Kansas railroad hall of fame selection committee. The committee will be composed of the following members:

1) The executive director of the Great Plains Transportation Museum, serving ex officio with all powers of an appointed member;
2) The executive director of the Kansas Historical Society, serving ex officio with all powers of an appointed member;
3) Two members appointed by the governor from a list of at least five individuals nominated by the board of directors of the Great Plains Transportation Museum. The list is comprised of current or former members of the Great Plains Transportation Museum with current members serving on the committee for as long as they serve on the board and former members serving a term of four years. Vacancies for these two members are also appointed by the governor from a list of three such current or former board of directors members.
4) One representative of the railroad industry appointed by the governor for a two-year term; and

5) Two representatives of the public who have been employed in the railroad industry in Kansas appointed by the governor for a two-year term.

All other vacancies, unless otherwise provided by the bill, will be filled in the same manner as the original appointment. Members of the selection committee cannot serve more than two consecutive terms, and the governor can remove a member at any time. The chairperson, vice chairperson and treasurer are all elected by the selection committee, and meetings are upon call of the chairperson or a majority of the committee members. Meetings are open to the public and held at the Great Plains Transportation Museum or at a location in close proximity to the Kansas railroad hall of fame. Members serve without compensation but may receive reimbursement for expenses incurred in attending meetings or performing duties of the selection committee from any available moneys.

Section 3 provides the criteria for nominating and selecting individuals for induction into the Kansas railroad hall of fame and establishes further powers and duties of the selection committee. The Kansas railroad hall of fame selection committee is required to annually select two individuals for induction into the hall of fame. Candidates for induction shall have worked in Kansas with an officially sanctioned railroad operating in Kansas, worked in Kansas in the manufacture of railroad-related products, cars or locomotives or have otherwise been significantly involved in the Kansas railroad industry. Nominations are made on a form prepared by the selection committee and made available to the public. The selection committee has the powers to provide for an appropriate location at the Great Plains Transportation Museum or within close proximity of the museum for the display of items or other historical material for the hall of fame; create and provide proper displays to advertise and promote the hall of fame; establish a website for the hall of fame; solicit and accept gifts, donations, services or real or personal property rights for the hall of fame, with any donations being deposited into a bank account established by the committee's treasurer; and enter into any agreements or contracts with entities to fulfill the duties of the selection committee.

Section 4 provides that the selection committee shall hold appropriate ceremonies to induct individuals selected to be in the Kansas railroad hall of fame. The induction ceremonies are required to be annually held on or around the same date each year at the Great Plains Transportation Museum or in a location in close proximity to the hall of fame. The selection committee is authorized to fix and charge fees for attendance at the ceremonies to recover expenses of the ceremony or other expenses of the hall of fame. Such fees shall be deposited and expended by the selection committee in the same manner as other gifts or donations received.

If enacted, the provisions of HB 2607 become effective July 1, 2026.