Good morning,

My name is Lon Smith, and I am the director of the Great Plains Transportation Museum in downtown Wichita, Kansas. We are located at 700 E. Douglas Ave and are part of the historic Union Station complex and our museum is adjacent to a dual mainline that boasts some fifty trains a day of the Union Pacific, BNSF, and the K & O.

I'm here today to provide proponent testimony on House Bill 2607 which would establish the officially recognized Kansas Railroad Hall of Fame within the Great Plains Transportation Musuem. The museum has operated for the last 44 years, being completely volunteer run until about a year ago. The museum hosts an impressive array of local and regional artifacts representing heritage from the Santa Fe, Frisco, Union Pacific, and more. We also possess two iconic locomotives within our collection, the Santa Fe 3768, a Northern 484 steam engine which began operation in 1938 and the Santa Fe 93 that was commissioned in 1967 and is currently under restoration in Kansas City. Both pulled the iconic Super Chief, passenger service from Chicago to Los Angeles, routed through Kansas.

It is our belief that the Great Plains Transportation Museum is the best location to host the railroad hall of fame given its location in the most populous city in the state of Kansas and as an active participant in the thriving resurgence of downtown Wichita as a key tourist destination. Not only would the railroad hall of fame provide another fantastic exhibit to add to our existing collection, it would also provide an opportunity to spotlight and praise the many Kansans whose work and service have supported the state and its railroad infrastructure development for decades. We respectfully call upon you to support this bill and establish, for the first time ever, an official state Railroad Hall of Fame at the Great Plains Transportation Museum.

Respectfully,

Lon Smith, Director
Great Plains Transportation Museum