

**To: Rep. Barb Wasinger, Chair**

**House Committee on Legislative Modernization**

**Proponent Testimony, SB-11**

**Randall Hardy, Citizen and former senator**

Chairwoman Wasinger and members of the Committee. Good morning. Thank you for this opportunity to address the committee on Senate Bill 11. My name is Randall Hardy a citizen and former State Senator, and interested party in the ad Astra Plaza project.

In 2017 as a newly elected Senator, I decided to tour the Capitol grounds one afternoon during conference committee report time. I arrived at the plaza as part of my tour, and I saw bricks and plaques at the plaza that had many Salina names that I immediately recognized.

After a little research, I discovered that the plaza was an unfinished plaza project related to the Ad astra sculpture on top of the dome, both done by a Salina artist. I found out that a state senator at that time thought it was a good idea to have a life-sized statue on the Statehouse grounds to give visitors an up-close view of the statue on top of the dome. Work on the Plaza was authorized and begun. But when the work on the dome was completed, donations for the Ad Astra Plaza dried

up, and work on the Plaza stopped. The Plaza went dormant, and it has been in its current unfinished state for the last two decades.

As it is, the Plaza is an embarrassment to the state of Kansas and the Statehouse grounds. If finished, it could be a glorious magnet for curious visitors wanting a better understanding of both the sculpture on top of the dome and history of Native Americans in Kansas.

Take a walk on the south side of the Statehouse and see the project for yourself. And think about how much nicer it would look if we would complete the project. It is the perfect complement to the work that will be done with the Docking building later. Now is the time to move this project forward! Thank you for your time, and I am happy to stand for questions.