



**House Committee on Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development
Testimony in Support of House Bill 2088- Fast Track Permits Act
Presented by Eric Stafford, VP of Government Affairs, Kansas Chamber**

Thursday, January 30, 2025

Mister Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Kansas Chamber. The Kansas Chamber represents small, medium and large businesses of all industry segments across the state. We appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2088, which requires approval of building permits within 60 days of receipt of a complete application “related to the development of a single-family residential, multifamily residential, commercial or industrial improvement upon real estate within the jurisdiction of such local governmental authority.”

As I researched this issue, I came across an article from a group called “Strong Towns,” whose mission statement is:

“We seek to replace America’s post-war pattern of development, the [Suburban Experiment](#), with a pattern of development that is financially strong and resilient. We advocate for cities of all sizes to be safe, livable, and inviting. We work to elevate local government to be the highest level of collaboration for people working together in a place, not merely the lowest level in a hierarchy of governments.”

On their website was an article (can be read [here](#)) titled “A permit process should never take a year. Here’s a different way.” This article highlights a Minnesota state law establishing these exact rules outlined in HB 2088. The author cites California and Florida as two states where the permitting process can take up to 12 months and how those of us in the Midwest simply couldn’t imagine such a process (Florida has since passed the same fast-tracking law as HB 2088).

HB 2088 provides certainty for all developers, commercial and residential alike by requiring a timely response to a completed application. Here in Shawnee County, the county has the authority to pull a permit if work has not been performed for 60 days.

“Every building permit issued by the Planning Department shall expire by limitation and become null and void if the building or work authorized by such permit is not commenced within 12-months from the issue date of such permit, **or if the building or work authorized by such permit is suspended or abandoned for a period of 60-days or more at any time after work is commenced.**”

While I could not find any obligation for permitting approval, that doesn’t mean one doesn’t exist. However, ensuring that local governments don’t string along developers for unknown reasons is a fair policy to balance government’s own timetable for revoking permits.

In closing, House Bill 2088 is a fair and reasonable policy to provide regulatory certainty across the state and we would respectfully ask for your support. I’d be happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.