

To: Chairmen Carl Turner and members of the House Taxation Committee

RE: Support of SB 227

As a lifetime resident of Wichita, I have observed the gradual decline of the city center and of many of the surrounding core neighborhoods, and for many years, have participated in the city's efforts to revitalize. I have been a residential realtor for more than 30 years, and I live in one of the inner neighborhoods.

Wichita, like many cities across the country, is experiencing a severe shortage of affordable housing. Much of that existing supply is located in older neighborhoods and many in a National Historic District. These homes are often plagued by the high cost of maintenance. The possible use of state historic tax credits has been a very successful tool to maintain and improve the neighborhood livability. Adoption of SB 227 would increase the marketability of our historic housing fabric, and provide a much-needed incentive to improve the condition of these historic gems.

Much of the success of the now vibrant Old Town, and revitalization of buildings for housing and commercial use downtown, is due to use of historic tax credits. Passage of SB 227 will play a vital part to continue this momentum.

Thank you for your consideration,

Claire Willenberg

President, North Riverside Neighborhood Association

Realtor, J. P. Weigand

Member, Wichita Historic Preservation Board