

**PROPONENT TESTIMONY BEFORE THE
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
REGARDING HOUSE BILL 2263**

**AN ACT DESIGNATING A FUTURE INTERCHANGE ON K-10 AS THE KRIS NORTON
MEMORIAL INTERCHANGE**

February 12, 2025

By Calvin E. Reed, P.E.

Placing memorial signs on our roadways and interchanges is an important part of how we recognize the Kansas citizens and their contributions to the success of our state. These designations are typically reserved for political figures who have had a meaningful and positive impact on the communities they serve. Often unrecognized are the dedicated public servants who are responsible for the services we as citizens of Kansas come to expect. It is with a spirit of gratitude to the many public servants at the Kansas Department of Transportation that I proudly provide proponent testimony for House Bill 2263, designating the future interchange of Wakarusa Drive, 27th Street and US-40/K-10 Highway (a.k.a. South Lawrence Trafficway) as the Kris Norton memorial interchange.

I had the distinct pleasure of working with Kris Norton, P.E. when I started at KDOT in 2002. Not your “typical” engineer, Kris always brought a thoughtful, empathetic and practical attitude to problem solving. This allowed him to relate and communicate to a wide variety of public audiences from farmers in southwest Kansas to city officials in our larger cities. His “get ‘er done” mentality kept large, complicated road and bridge projects moving forward. Because of this, Kris was respected across our industry – both inside and outside the agency. His impact was felt across the state in the hundreds of projects he designed and managed.

In a public meeting for the South Lawrence Trafficway, I personally witnessed Kris defray a very tense situation where an adjacent property owner was upset by the potential impacts of the project to their property. In this instance, Kris promised to go back and look at options that would lessen the impact – and he followed through. In a follow up public meeting, after seeing the adjustments made, the same property owner hugged Kris and thanked him for his efforts.

Anytime we at KDOT work on a project close to home, it takes on special significance, and the South Lawrence Trafficway was no different for Kris. This project was less than a mile away from his home and adjacent to the softball fields that he often played at during the summer. The memorializing of this interchange is an appropriate legacy for Kris and his fellow public servants.