

Aaron Frits, P.E., F.ASCE

Kansas Senate Committee on Transportation RE: HB2263

February 26, 2025

Members of the Committee:

My name is Aaron Frits, and I am writing to you in support of naming the future interchange at K-10 and 27th Street in Lawrence, Kansas after Kris Norton. I had the privilege and honor to work with Kris as a former KDOT employee and fellow civil engineer. I also am lucky to count myself amongst the many friends Kris made along the way.

I came to Kansas in 2003 to work for KDOT and Kris was my direct supervisor for 9+ years. During my 17 years at KDOT, we worked together on hundreds of infrastructure projects across every corner of Kansas. From 2016 to 2019, Kris and I managed the South Lawrence Trafficway project that is currently under construction, including the discovery phase that identified this specific interchange that could potentially bear his name. Another local project we partnered on was the interchange at Bob Billings and K-10, in Lawrence.

To say that Kris was passionate about infrastructure and civil engineering is an understatement. He was a proud and loyal Kansan who devoted his entire career to KDOT and improving the lives of Kansans through infrastructure improvements; he definitely “bled KDOT orange”. Kris taught me not only key design and project management skills, but also effective leadership and life skills that I use to this day. The impact Kris had on those that worked for, with, and around him continues to be seen in the engineering community – he not only designed and managed many a KDOT project, but more importantly, hired and trained the current and future generation of leaders that continue to move infrastructure forward across the country.

There is no better way to honor his legacy than to name this interchange after him. Not only is it the perfect way to highlight Kris’ decades of dedicated service to KDOT, but it honors his memory and the love he had for Lawrence and the state of Kansas. It will stand as a proud testament to his life and career, a direct connection between the work he did and the city he loved. It’s fitting that the interchange will be less than a mile from the house he raised his family in for over 20 years and the house he peacefully passed away in, on May 24, 2024.

I ask that you approve this bill in support of such a dedicated and proud Kansas Citizen.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aaron M. Frits". The signature is stylized with a large, looped 'F' and a cursive 'S'.

Aaron Frits