



**To:** Kansas Senate Ways and Means Committee

**From:** Bradley Harris, City Administrator

**Date:** February 4, 2024

**Re:** Support of Senate Bill 86 (SB 86)

Chairperson Billinger, Vice Chair Claeys, Ranking Member Pettey and members of the Senate Ways and Means Committee,

Thank you for considering the passage of Senate Bill 86 (SB 86). The City of North Newton is a rural community of Harvey County located adjacent to the City of Newton to its north. Our City limits begin just 1.25 miles to the north of the existing Amtrak rail station in Newton. As a City which values its trail systems, with residents always interested in new opportunities to improve multi-modal transportation options, **we support SB86 in the strongest terms.**

As the home of Bethel College, North Newton experiences seasonal surges in outside visitors as Bethel hosts athletic events, and as parents come to visit their children whom attend Bethel. It would be of great benefit to our community to be able to host visitors from Oklahoma and Texas in ways which do not require a long drive or a flight.

We are also excited by the economic development opportunities this could create for our area. Harvey County has proven to be one of the State's strongest sources of manufacturing, and we believe these opportunities will only be enhanced by allowing downtown Newton to be home to two separate passenger rail services.

Passenger rail is seeing a resurgence in interest in the United States, so I thank this committee for considering legislation which will make Kansas a visible leader in this area.

Best regards,

Bradley Harris  
City Administrator  
City of North Newton  
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