



February 3, 2025

RE: Written Testimony in Support of:

Senate Bill 86 (SB86) and passenger rail extension in Kansas

The Wichita Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (WAMPO) is pleased to express its support for Senate Bill 86 (SB86) and the expansion of passenger rail services in Kansas. We believe that passenger rail services will have a positive impact in the following key areas:

- **Economic Development:** Strengthening economic opportunities in Kansas and neighboring states.
- **Transportation System Improvements:** Enhancing multi-modal transportation options for the public.
- **Quality of Life Enhancements:** Reducing travel times on critical corridors by alleviating traffic congestion, leading to improved traffic flow in the future.

WAMPO serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Wichita metropolitan region. MPOs are federally mandated regional policy bodies for urbanized areas with populations exceeding 50,000. According to the 2020 U.S. Decennial Census, the WAMPO region has a population of **547,230**. MPOs recognize the critical link between transportation and broader societal goals, including economic prosperity, air quality, social equity, environmental stewardship, and overall quality of life.

In coordination with the State of Kansas and Wichita Transit, WAMPO is responsible for carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process for **22 cities and three counties** in South Central Kansas.

WAMPO is governed by a board of local elected officials who have adopted policies that broadly support investments in multi-modal transportation, including public transit, active transportation, freight movement, and passenger rail. We strongly support **SB86**, which will provide crucial financial resources for the expansion of passenger rail service in Kansas.

Please feel free to contact me or my staff at **316-779-1320** or via email at Chad.Parasa@wampo.org if you require any additional information in support of **SB86** and the passenger rail extension in Kansas.

Sincerely,

Chad Parasa, PE, PTOE
WAMPO Executive Director