

SESSION OF 2026

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2739

As Amended by House Committee on
Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

Brief*

HB 2739, as amended, would remove requirements for fire sprinklers in townhouses of four attached units or fewer.

The bill would prohibit a municipality from adopting or enforcing any ordinance, order, code, standard, or rule for construction projects approved after July 1, 2026, requiring the installation of a multi-purpose residential fire protection sprinkler system or any other fire sprinkler protection system in a townhouse of four or fewer attached units. No provision of the bill would prohibit the voluntary installation of a fire sprinkler or any other fire sprinkler protection system, nor would it exempt a townhouse from any other applicable code requirements.

The bill would define “townhouse” to mean a single-family dwelling unit in a group of three or more attached units in which each unit extends from the foundation to roof and has a yard or public way on at least two sides. The bill would require a townhouse of four or fewer attached units to not exceed three stories above grade, unless restricted to two stories above grade by the respective municipality, and each unit to have separation by a 2-hour fire-resistance-rated wall assembly or separation by a 1-hour fire-resistance-rated wall assembly and a multi-purpose residential fire protection sprinkler system.

The bill would modify the definition of “public assistance” as it relates to accessibility standards for certain dwellings to

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <https://klrd.gov/>

remove the Kansas Housing Investor Tax Credit and Kansas Moderate Income Housing Program from the definition.

The bill would make technical and conforming amendments.

Background

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development at the request of Representative Tarwater.

House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

In the house Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by Representative Helwig and representatives of Kansas Building Industry Association; Kansas Housing Solutions, LLC; and Greenamyre Rentals. Proponents voiced support for the removal of fire sprinkler requirements resulting in a reduction in administrative burden and allowing for an accelerated construction of housing, particularly in rural areas.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by representatives of the city of Garden City, Kansas Association of Realtors, Kansas Manufactured Housing Association, and Pomeroy Development.

Neutral testimony was provided by the State Fire Marshal, who advocated for a modernization of the State Fire Code and for additional clarifying language to be added to the bill surrounding various building structures.

Opponent testimony was provided by representatives of the City of Lenexa Fire Department and the Kansas State Firefighters Association. Opponents voiced concerns over fire safety and the potential dangers caused by modern building

materials, the various fire safety needs and dangers across the state, and whether a universal code would be able to provide adequate safety standards.

Written-only opponent testimony was provided by representatives of the Fire Marshal Association of Kansas, Heart of America, and Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs.

The House Committee amended the bill to:

- Prohibit a municipality from adopting or enforcing any ordinance, order, code, standard, or rule for construction projects approved after July 1, 2026;
- Not exempt a townhouse from any other applicable code requirements;
- Define “townhouse” and require townhouses of four units or fewer to not exceed three stories, unless restricted to two units by a local municipality, and require separation by a fire-resistance-rated wall assembly or a fire-resistance-rated wall assembly and a residential fire protection sprinkler;
- Modify the definition of “public assistance” as it relates to accessibility standards for certain dwellings by removing the Kansas Housing Investor Tax Credit and Kansas Moderate Income Housing Program from the definition; and
- Make technical and conforming amendments.

Fiscal Information

A fiscal note was not available at the time of the House Committee hearing.

Fire Sprinkler; Fire Safety; Fire Prevention; Multi-Family Dwelling; Residential Structure