



**Senate Utilities Committee**

**March 11, 2020**

**Stephen P. Duerst, JD**

**Oral Proponent - HB2618**

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Stephen Duerst and I appear in support of HB2618 on behalf of the Kansas Cable Telecommunications Association (KCTA). Our members, including companies such as Cox Communications, Charter Communications, Comcast and Eagle Communications collectively provide more broadband to Kansans than any other group.

The KCTA took the lead several years ago, and worked with other stakeholders and legislators to help push for the creation of a Broadband Task Force to join the growing number of states that were implementing statewide broadband deployment plans. We were please to participate in the good work of the Task Force.

After months of meetings, the Task Force reported to the legislature that it recommended creating a broadband deployment grant program. This recommendation was acted upon during the 2020 Session with the drafting of HB2618.

We believe HB2618 is a good start in helping to fix the 'digital divide' in the state of Kansas. Because our member companies have national experts on staff who have helped craft similar bills across the country, we stand ready to assist in any way we can as this program continues to move forward through the legislative process.