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TESTIMONY

TO: SENATE WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE

FROM: SCOTT HEIDNER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING
COMPANIES OF KANSAS

DATE: MARCH 13, 2019

RE: SB 186

Madame Chair, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear today. My name is Scott Heidner, I am the Executive Director of the American Council of Engineering Companies of Kansas. ACEC KS is the trade association representing private sector engineering companies in Kansas. We are here today in support of SB 186.

SB 186 is one of the recommendations that came from last year's transportation task force. The task force was formed to offer solutions to the growing needs for transportation infrastructure investment in Kansas. ACEC Kansas believes all options should be on the table for consideration as policy makers look for revenue streams to help Kansas meet its infrastructure needs.



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I know this Committee is well versed in the reasons to support infrastructure investment. Our highway and bridge infrastructure have been underfunded for years due to sweeps from the highway fund, resulting in deferred maintenance and delayed projects. Good infrastructure enhances economic development by ensuring the efficient transportation of goods. New technology means greater safety and accessibility to our state's infrastructure. And infrastructure investment means jobs and economic growth as money spent is reinvested in Kansas.

SB 186 creates the framework needed for Kansas to plan an aggressive investment in transportation infrastructure moving forward. It upholds the commitments made under T-Works as the top priorities of a new program, while positioning Kansas to do the research and consultation necessary to provide the best value and investment in the decade to come.

We would like to note that we have already been approached by KDOT to start a dialogue about alternative project delivery as laid out on page 3, lines 10-14. ACEC very much appreciates the opportunity to participate in those discussions. Kansas needs to maintain its commitment to the qualifications-based selection (QBS) of design engineering services, which we are confident can be done in partnership with KDOT and other stakeholders as we explore statutory authority for KDOT to use alternative delivery.

We would suggest one change to the bill. In New Section 2 on page 3 it requires the completion of unfinished T-Works projects before construction could begin on new projects. There is an exception on page 3, line 26, where it says unless "federal funds"



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become available. We would suggest changing that to “non-state” funds to ensure an opportunity is not lost when other sources of funding (grants, local government entities, etc.) become available.

I thank the Committee for the opportunity to be here today and encourage you to support passage of SB 186. I’d be glad to stand for questions at the appropriate time.