

State of Kansas
House of Representatives

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Topeka, Kansas 66612



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Blake Carpenter
House Speaker Pro Tempore
Representative, 81st District

March 18, 2024

Madam Chair, Ranking Member, and members of the House Legislative Modernization Committee,

I want to express my strong support for the enactment of **HB 2842**, which represents a critical step forward in securing the information technology infrastructure of the State of Kansas. The necessity of this legislation has become all too clear considering recent events, such as the cybersecurity incident at Kansas State University, the cyber-attack on the Judicial Branch, and the results of the Legislative Post Audit that underscored the vulnerabilities in our current IT systems. The attack on the Kansas Judicial Branch was particularly alarming, as it took out the service for months, highlighting the profound consequences these breaches can have on the accessibility of essential services and the administration of justice. Fortunately, the cybersecurity incident at Kansas State University was stopped before it caused large-scale issues. However, we are aware that change needs to happen, and I believe this legislation will help Kansas move toward a strong state of cybersecurity.

HB 2842 proposes comprehensive measures aimed at strengthening our cybersecurity infrastructure across all branches of state government. Key components of the bill include:

The establishment of Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) positions within the judicial and legislative branches, ensuring that cybersecurity efforts are led by individuals with the requisite expertise and authority.

The requirement for all state agencies to comply with minimum cybersecurity standards, creating a uniform security posture that can effectively guard against the sophisticated cyber threats we face today.

The exemption of certain audit reports from the open records act, recognizing the importance of protecting sensitive security information from potential adversaries.

Appropriations for fiscal years ending June 30, 2025, and June 30, 2026, for the Office of Information Technology Services, Kansas Information Security Office, and the Adjutant General, demonstrating a commitment to providing the necessary resources for these critical cybersecurity initiatives.

This legislation also mandates a strategic integration of information technology services across state government, fostering a more coordinated and efficient approach to cybersecurity. By centralizing IT services and ensuring that all branches of government adhere to high standards of data protection, we can better protect the personal and sensitive information of our citizens.

The recent cyber-attacks and the results of the Legislative Post Audit serve as a stark reminder of the importance of robust cybersecurity measures. The consequences of such attacks are not limited to the immediate disruption of services; they can also erode public trust in our government's ability to safeguard the data entrusted to it. House Bill 2842 represents a comprehensive and forward-thinking response to these challenges, and its passage is essential for protecting the State of Kansas from future cyber threats.

I urge the committee to support the passage of HB 2842, as it is a necessary step towards enhancing the cybersecurity posture of our state. By doing so, we can ensure the safety of our IT infrastructure and the security of our citizens' data.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Blake Carpenter". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Blake Carpenter
Speaker Pro Tempore
District 81