

Testimony House Federal and State Affairs Committee (SB262)

This testimony is in favor of SB262 authorizing the construction of a statue honoring Dwight David Eisenhower on the capital grounds.

I am Merrill Eisenhower Atwater. I am the former Director of Aviation for the Kansas Department of Transportation and I am currently the COO of People to People International a 501(c) (3) established in 1956 by President Eisenhower

Thank you, Chairman, for allowing me to speak on SB262. It is truly an honor to be here, and I look forward to any questions at the end of my testimony.

Kansas is the home of Dwight David Eisenhower who is a testament to Kansas values and is a symbol to all in the state of what a Kansan can accomplish. Growing up dirt poor and struggling through life's trials and tribulations, he became the Supreme Allied Commander during WWII and then President of these United States.

Eisenhower is an example to all in this country that come from an impoverished background to show what hard work and true dedication can do to shape the world we live in. The shaping of the world may have started in Kansas, but it took General Eisenhower all around the world, including fighting Nazis in France, Italy and Germany, to the domestic agenda that was accomplished by our 34th President. President Eisenhower was a Statesmen, balanced the budget, passed the first civil right legislation since reconstruction, and is the father of everything we call modern transportations in this great Republic.

The statue that is being proposed in our capital grounds is humbling to me knowing that I am the great grandson of President Eisenhower. As a fellow Kansan, this statue will serve as a constant reminder to all that live here that no matter your race, color, religion, or economic status, you can achieve the American Dream by digging down deep in the dirt and pulling yourself up to reach for the stars.

Thank you all for allowing me to present this testimony. Please let me know if there are any questions that I can answer.