Testimony in Support of HB 2513
House Taxation Committee
Monday, February 10, 2020
Alex Clayton, Topeka Lodging Association

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Alex Clayton and I'm here as both a Topeka hotelier and member of the Topeka Lodging Association. I'm here in support of HB 2513, because I strongly believe in the importance of the transient guest tax and its positive impact on the travel and tourism industry, and I believe this tax should be collected from *all* lodging establishments.

As general manager of a hotel grossing over $1M in sales each year, I am proud to say I have played a role in contributing to what was more than $48 million in transient guest tax revenues in the state of Kansas last year. These tax dollars are in turn used to promote the travel and tourism industry across the state, bringing thousands of travelers into our cities and towns for overnight stays, many of whom opt to stay in AirBnB properties. However, the transient guest tax dollars are only collected from hotels in the state of Kansas.

I have spent the better part of 10 years in the hotel industry, and in that time I have had the privilege of witnessing a number of different markets grow in allure to outside travelers, in large part due to the effective use of transient guest tax revenues. In that time I have also seen the growth of AirBnB, which has capitalized on these market's development in attraction to become what is now a multi-billion dollar player in the travel and tourism industry.

As benefactors of the use of TGT dollars, hundreds of AirBnB properties across the state are able to host travelers without contributing their fair share in tax dollars. Both hotels and AirBnB can coexist, and both can work together to promote our industry in a way that benefits all parties involved. It is high time we leveled the playing field for all lodging establishments in Kansas by joining the 37 other states in the country that collect this tax from AirBnB establishments, and say yes to HB 2513.