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Testimony Kansas Senate Transportation HB 2247

Chairman Petersen and Members of the Committee, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in support of HB 2247.

Max Zimmerman and Jack Taylor are true champions for improving road conditions in Southwest Kansas. They both dedicated a portion of their lives advocating for Southwest Passage Initiative for Regional Interstate Transportation (SPIRIT). The amount of passion these two demonstrated is like no other.

Max Zimmerman was born and raised in Liberal. He graduated from Liberal High School and the University of Kansas. He was a Captain in the United States Air Force and a navigator on a B-36 Bomber during the Korean Conflict. After his military service he returned home to raise his family and to join the family business. He was a City Commissioner and leader in many organizations including the Liberal Chamber of Commerce, Noon Lions Club, and Rotary Club. Max founded SPIRT, and always worked to improve Liberal, Kansas.

Jack Taylor worked much of his career in the oil and gas industry. He wasn't born in Liberal, but he raised his family there and made it his own. After a successful career in Oil and Gas he became the Executive Director of the Liberal Chamber of Commerce for several years. He was also the executive director of SPIRIT.

It was their goal to transform Highway 54 into a four-lane highway from Wichita to El Paso, Texas, not only for the safety of those traveling on Highway 54 but also to increase the economic impact that a four-lane highway brings to communities along the 54 routes.

When Jack attended meetings with Jerry Moran, Pat Roberts, KDOT, etc., Highway 54 was always at the top of the list. It is with that passion and determination that they were able to find success in their endeavors.

Max and Jack are very deserving of this honor, their life successes speak for themselves. These two men exemplify all that is good about Liberal, Kansas. They took pride in their community and worked tirelessly to make it better.