



Mark Tomb
Vice President of Governmental Affairs
Kansas Association of REALTORS®
3644 SW Burlingame Rd.
Topeka, KS 66611
785-414-5155
mark@kansasrealtor.com

To: Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee
From: Mark Tomb, VP of Governmental Affairs
Date: February 7, 2022

Re: Testimony in Support of SB 376

On behalf of the Kansas Association of REALTORS® (KAR), thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of policies outlined in SB 376. As REALTORS®, we reaffirm the goal of “a decent home and a suitable living environment for every family.” REALTORS® are committed to helping every single Kansan who so desires to realize the America Dream of homeownership. The policies included in SB 376 provide additional and potentially powerful options for Kansans trying to solve our state’s housing issues.

KAR represents over 11,000 members involved in residential, commercial and agricultural real estate and has advocated on behalf of the state’s property owners for more than 100 years. REALTORS® serve an important role in the state’s economy and are dedicated to working with our elected officials to create better communities by supporting economic development, a high quality of life and providing affordable housing opportunities while protecting the rights of private property owners.

Increasing access to homeownership is a goal of REALTORS® and it should be a goal for the State of Kansas. Simply put, we need more housing to support the needs of our current and future workforce. A shortage of quality housing is an undeniable barrier to economic growth and development in any community, particularly those in rural areas. During the pandemic, sales of existing homes in most areas of the state have been fairly robust, but there exists an underlying issue with the market involving supply. The state’s housing shortage exists at nearly all price segments and has numerous causes.

SB 376 makes changes to the popular Rural Housing Incentive District Act, mainly by adding Topeka as a potential location for its use. The legislation also makes a dramatic investment in the State Housing Trust Fund with the goal of increasing state loans and grants to local governments for use towards housing construction and infrastructure projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 376. This bill offers a strong set of tools to address housing issues while focusing resources to rural areas. KAR requests that the Senate Federal and State Affairs Committee act on this bill favorably.