



214 SW 6th Street, Suite 300
Topeka, KS 66603
785-235-1307

**In Support of HB 2549
House Judiciary Committee
February 8, 2012**

I'm Kent Cornish, President/Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Broadcasters. We represent nearly 280 radio and television stations across the state.

Over the years we have tried to consistently support legislation that keeps government open to the people. We are one of the original sponsors of the Kansas Sunshine Coalition for Open Government, whose mission it is to enhance awareness of open government in Kansas. The Coalition believes the most responsive and efficient government is accessible and open.

In our opinion, House Bill 2549 simply brings open records to the 21st century by including email, texting or other electronic means just like paper records. Every public official paid by the citizens of Kansas using facilities paid by the citizens of Kansas must recognize that openness allows citizens to make intelligent, informed decisions about the direction of their government and the people they elect.

In their description of the Kansas Open Records Act (or KORA), the Kansas Attorney General's Office states, "**It is the public policy of Kansas that "public records shall be open for inspection by any person unless otherwise provided, and this act shall be liberally construed and applied to promote such policy."** (KSA 45-216(a))

As that policy points out, there are exemptions, but the KORA goes on to say, "**The burden of proving an exemption from disclosure is on the agency not disclosing the information.**" (*State Dept. of SRS v. Public Employee Relations Board*, 249 Kan. 163, 170 (1991). K.S.A. 45-218.)

One last quote. This from Abraham Lincoln. "Let the people know the facts, and the country will be safe."

Thank you for your time and support of HB 2549.