

Department of Administration Testimony

on

HB 2396

House General Government Subcommittee
Wednesday, March 20, 2013

Chuck Knapp
Director of Operations and Public Affairs

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

The Kansas Department of Administration supports HB 2396.

As you know, Legislative Post Audit recently made several recommendations regarding the State Surplus Property Program. One such recommendation was giving the Department of Administration sole authority in designating surplus State property.

In our response to the LPA, which is due April 1, 2013, we will concur with all of the recommendations made for our agency. Obviously, this particular policy can only be changed by the Legislature, and we support your efforts.

The November 2012 Legislative Post Audit claimed giving the Department of Administration the authority to declare properties surplus has two potential benefits:

“It could provide an objective opinion on what properties are potentially surplus. Defining whether a property is surplus requires subjective judgment. Because agency officials have a vested interest in the properties they own, their evaluation of surplus properties is subject to bias.”

“It could establish clear responsibility for identifying surplus property. Under the current system, that responsibility is shared by both the Department of Administration and individual state agencies. As a result, it is much harder to hold either party accountable when surplus property is not sold in a timely manner.”

“Unless the department receives adequate authority to make a surplus determination independently, it is unlikely that much real property will ever be considered surplus, much less be sold. That is because in many cases agencies have little incentive to sell their property...”

Attachment 3
GGBC 3-20-13

Mr. Chairman, we recognize our Department can improve in designating surplus property. HB 2396 gives us the tools necessary to carry out this important mission.

We appreciate the Committee's interest in this matter, and we look forward to working with you to ensure Kansas taxpayers do not own more property than is absolutely necessary to carry out the functions of their State Government.

With that, our Chief Counsel Sarah Shipman and I would be glad to stand for questions.