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# TESTIMONY

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## **Senate Utilities Committee Senate Bill 20 Underground Utility Damage Prevention**

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The City of Wichita has been a voluntary member of Kansas One-Call system for a number of years, and has found membership very beneficial. The City is concerned that the proposed legislation **not** make changes that could affect any of the procedures currently employed by the City to respond to location requests.

At this time, the City does not respond to all parties that call the One-Call system. Staff reviews excavation requests, and makes an initial determination in the office as to whether that excavation poses a threat to any of its water or sewer lines. If it poses a threat, it is transmitted to field staff that locates the utility lines that may be at risk. At this time, only approximately 25% of the locate requests received actually result in a field line location. Any component of this Bill that would require direct notification in response to a locate request would result in a significant increase in staff time and expense, and would not improve the operation of the locate system. Under the current system, the City is responsible for damages if it receives a location request and then fails to mark its utility lines. The City supports its current practices that have worked well for over two decades. The City does not and will not support a positive response to each locate request.

The City also believes that the existing tolerances for locates are adequate to protect its utility lines, and a more precise standard would not improve the locate system. The subject Bill appears to grant the KCC the opportunity to reduce location tolerances, and the City will not support a reduction of the existing tolerances.

The City receives over 72,000 locate requests pre year, and last year only 36 utility lines were hit and damaged by excavators. Of those that were hit, only 14 of them were as a result of improper locations provided by the City. A system that works 99.98% of the time for the City of Wichita is not in need of repair.