

Testimony on **HB 2084**
before the
House Elections & Governmental Organization
by

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Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in opposition to H.B. 2084.

Section I of this bill deletes the word “interactive” before communication. “Interactive” defines the type of communication that violates the Open Meetings Law. The term communication is defined as “the process by which information is exchanged between individuals through a common system of symbols, signs or behavior.” *Merriam Webster Dictionary*. The word “interactive” is critical as it requires a discussion or an exchange of information in the form of a dialogue.

A review of the case of *State ex rel, Stephan v. Board of County Com’rs of Seward County*, 254 Kan. 446 (1994) and the 1994 legislative changes to KOMA may be helpful. Kansas Attorney General Opinion No. 98-26 stated, “By expressly including telephone calls and interactive communications, it is clear that physical presence is no longer required for there to be a meeting.”

Subsection (b) of H.B. 2084 would make it more difficult for school board members to attend and share their individual opinions at community meetings, weddings, anniversary celebrations, chamber of commerce meetings and other meetings held to share information and develop cooperative efforts among local units of government.

Thank you for your consideration.