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LISA M. MOSER
106TH DISTRICT

March 5, 2024

To: Chairman Shannon Francis, House Committee on Transportation
From: State Representative Lisa M. Moser, House District 106
RE: Oral Proponent testimony for SB 410, designating US Hwy 81 in Republic County as the Merle Miller Memorial Highway.

Good afternoon, Chair Francis, Vice-Chair Neely, Ranking Member Ballard, and Committee Members,

I am Representative Lisa Moser, here today to testify in support of SB 410.

I remember as a young girl when my dad would drive our family on I-70 out to Salina to see my oldest sister who was attending college there. I was amazed by the four lanes and the traffic as it hurried along at speeds I didn't realize; I just knew it was much faster than we ever traveled on our rock roads and two-lane highways in Northeast Kansas.

Although I never knew Mr. Merle Miller, I have read about his accomplishments as a newspaper editor in Republic County, and his unparalleled desire to encourage growth in the local rural area as well as wanting to spur the entire economy of Kansas by the completion of a north/south four-lane expressway through the state. Merle and his father, A.Q. Miller, both held a long-range vision of travel and roads during their lifetimes regarding how transportation would play a vital role in the advancement not only of Kansas but of this great nation.

Merle's hometown of Belleville has come to be known over the years as the "Crossroads of America," where US Hwy 36 and US Hwy 81 intersect. As Kansas had the I-70 four-lane going east/west across the state approximately 70 miles south, Merle envisioned a four-lane highway traversing Kansas north/south. His tireless efforts over a 40-year period resulted in just that, and a robust four-lane Hwy 81 through Republic County completed the dream.

Representing Republic County as part of my House District 106, it is my privilege to recommend that the portion of US Hwy 81 running through Republic County be named in honor of Merle M. Miller, an individual who had not only the improvement of his local region in mind, but also the vision of connecting Kansas with the rest of the nation from Canada to Mexico.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 410. I ask that your committee pass the bill out favorably. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.