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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Improving safety in highway work zones

Supervisor Greg Bayless has seen far too many “near misses” in his years at the Kansas Department of Transportation office in Anthony.

“Our flagman had traffic shut down, in his lane, with one lone car stopped and in total control, we thought. All at once a pickup truck approached to stop and join the second vehicle in line ... except he did not get stopped,” Bayless said. “The pickup truck struck the back of the parked car hard, launching it towards the flagman, only to end up inches shy of striking him.”

Bayless shared this and other stories at a statewide safety event today in Topeka. He were joined by Transportation Secretary Mike King, Kansas Highway Patrol Major John Eichkorn and Kansas Turnpike Authority Equipment Operator Brian Higinbotham from Lawrence. Numerous transportation partners as well as eighth graders from Silver Lake Junior/Senior High School also attended the event.

The safety event is one of several activities taking place in Kansas as part of National Work Zone Awareness Week, March 23-27, which raises awareness of the hazards and dangers highway workers and motorists face every day. A series of safety blogs and other information can be found on KDOT’s website, www.ksdot.org.

Buildings and structures across Kansas will be lit up in orange all week to highlight work zone safety. Check out the Governor’s Mansion, the Amelia Earhart Bridge in Atchison, the Visitor’s Center in the Capitol, the Travel Information Center on I-70 near Goodland, the Eisenhower State Office Building, the 87th Street bridges over I-35 and Renner truss in Lenexa as well as the fountain in front of the Lenexa City Hall,

the front of the Topeka City Hall building and all KDOT offices in Topeka, Salina, Norton, Chanute, Hutchinson and Garden City.

Last year in Kansas work zones, 397 people were injured and seven people were killed. When traveling through a work zone, motorists should:

- ♦Follow traffic control
- ♦Stay alert
- ♦Watch for workers
- ♦Expect delays
- ♦Allow ample space between you and the car in front of you
- ♦Change lanes when directed to do so

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