



March 21, 2017

Chair Tyson and Members of the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee:

At Spirit AeroSystems, we have demand for highly-skilled workers who will design and build complex aerostructures for the next generation of commercial and defense aircraft. Not only do we depend on our current workforce to achieve success competing in a fierce global economy, but we also depend on a robust pipeline of future employees who have the training and certification required to work in the aerospace industry.

While demand for skilled workers is increasing, cost barriers for younger generations to enter into engineering and technical training programs can sometimes deter students from choosing a career path in aerospace manufacturing.

That's why we believe incentives created by HB 2036 would make entry into a high-paying aerospace career more accessible to Kansas students, and would allow companies such as ours to hire qualified candidates to fill open positions.

Spirit already invests in scholarship programs for Kansas engineering and technical education students in addition to offering robust intern programs for college students in a variety of career fields that can lead to full-time jobs. This summer Spirit will offer work experiences for high school students interested in careers in advance manufacturing. We also partner with institutions of higher education to advise about the skills needed by our industry. I am privileged to serve on the Wichita Area Technical College's governing board, which helps the National Center for Aviation Training focus on the critical job skills needed in our highly-technical manufacturing environment.

If HB 2036 were signed into law, the state would be further helping the Kansas aviation industry be more competitive by creating financial incentives for students considering a career in aerospace to earn their engineering degree or technical certifications.

The bill would also incentivize employers to hire Kansas students for jobs based in our state after they graduate. With an increasingly global economy, this is especially important for aviation companies looking to expand their operations.

Spirit's Wichita site depends on having access to highly-skilled engineers and mechanics. I respectfully ask you to support HB 2036 because of the positive effect it would have for students seeking engineering degrees and aerospace manufacturing certifications – and for companies needing to hire qualified employees.

Justin Welner
Vice President, Human Resources & EHS
Spirit AeroSystems