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J.R. CLAEYS
69TH DISTRICT

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STATE BUILDING CONSTRUCTION
APPROPRIATIONS
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February 5, 2019

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2118

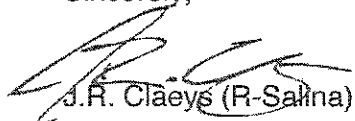
Mr. Chairman,

The Kansas Aerospace Workforce Education Incentive Program is modeled after successful programs in aerospace states that are currently winning the battle for aerospace jobs. Since 2005, Oklahoma aerospace jobs have increased 93 percent. In Kansas, we have seen an 18 percent decline. The jobs are not disappearing from the United States, they are simply disappearing from Kansas.

We are not competing with a trained workforce. The Kansas Aerospace Workforce Education Incentive Program rewards graduating from a Kansas college, taking a job in Kansas, and growing jobs in Kansas. The result of this style of incentive has been major employer relocations in Oklahoma while Kansas has seen the loss of major employers. Boeing is now in Oklahoma. In the emerging UAS sector, Kratos has located over 300 premium-wage jobs in Oklahoma. Kansas has not seen a major relocation in the time since Oklahoma entered the fight. But they aren't the only ones. North Carolina has seen a 141 percent increase in aerospace jobs since 2005. Again, Kansas has lost 18 percent of our aerospace jobs.

This is not the only action you should take to get Kansas back in the game. One bill will not reverse 15 years of Kansas sitting on the sideline. We need an Aerospace commission. We need a partnership with private industry that promotes workforce development. As you consider HB 2118, view it as one of the several actions that Kansas needs to become competitive for aerospace jobs in an environment where other states have taken over as leaders in job creation.

Sincerely,


J.R. Claeys (R-Salina)