

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Karin Brownlee at 8:35 A.M. on January 11, 2007 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:  
David Wysong- un-excused

Committee staff present:  
Amy Deckard, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Kathie Sparks, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Norm Furse, Revisor of Statutes  
Mike Heim, Revisor of Statutes  
Jackie Lunn, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:  
Secretary Garner, Kansas Department of Labor

Others attending:  
See attached list.

Chairperson Brownlee introduced Secretary Garner, Kansas Department of Labor to request a bill introduction.

Secretary Garner presented written testimony (**Attachment 1**) and stated he was requesting the introduction of a bill proposing changes to the Employment Security Laws recommended by the Employment Security Advisory Council to reduce Unemployment Insurance taxes on Kansas employers while ensuring the future integrity of the UI Trust Fund.

**Senator Reitz made a motion to introduce the bill. Senator Emler seconded. Motion carried.**

Chairperson Brownlee stated that they did have another request for a bill to repeal the minimum wage stating that Kansas' market was driving its wages much higher than the minimum. The bill would be amending the statute to remove the minimum wage.

**Senator Emler made a motion to introduce a bill to repeal the minimum wage. Senator Jordan seconded. Motion carried.**

Next, Chairperson Brownlee referred the Committee to handouts regarding the Mission Statement and Goals of the Committee which were revised in the 2005 session; (**Attachment 2**) and Senate Commerce Committee Goals, Jan 2005. (**Attachment 3**) The Committee discussed the goals of the Committee and noted that some of the goals set had been met citing the IKE Report to be one of those. The Committee had concerns regarding vocational and technical education schools and the importance they hold for Kansas and the fact they are not treated the same as universities and colleges, agreeing the funding was not adequate. Workforce development in rural areas was also discussed. The subject of diversification was another topic of discussion noting that the three big engines in the Kansas economy are oil and gas and aviation and that they were subject to change at any time. In order for Kansas to have a stronger economy that just doesn't rely on Oil and Gas and Aviation Kansas should diversify and bring in new industry.

Upon the conclusion of the discussion, the Committee was in agreement they need to focus on the following for the 2007 session: Diversification of jobs; Rural Economic Development; and Accountability.

The Committee also agreed they needed updates from:

- Kan-ed
- Kansas Center for Entrepreneurship
- Kansas Bioscience Authority
- Kansas Small Business Development Center
- E 911
- Tourism Initiative

## CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE Senate Commerce Committee at 8:30 A.M. on January 11, 2007 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

- Training project in aviation industry in Wichita
- Nano Technology
- K-State Communication Center

Chairperson Brownlee asked the Committee if they had any interest in taking field trips to visit Heartland Park and Innovia. The Committee was in agreement they would like to visit those sites to see first hand how some of the STAR Bond projects that the Committee has approved are doing.

Next, Chairperson Brownlee introduced Kathie Sparks, Legislative Research to give a review of the report for the Joint Committee on Economic Development. (Attachment 4)

Upon the completion of Ms. Sparks review there was a short discussion. Chairperson Brownlee gave a review of the agenda for next week and adjourned the meeting at 9:25 a.m. with the next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 8:35 a.m. in room 123S.