



January 31, 2022

**Testimony in support of Senate Bill 347-regarding economic development tools to encourage location of economic development “megaprojects.”**

Chairman Tarwater, Vice-Chair Long and Members of the House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 347 (“APEX”). My name is Steve Kelly and I serve as Vice President of Economic Development for the Lawrence Chamber and Economic Development Corporation of Lawrence and Douglas County. I have worked in economic development for over 30 years at both the state and local level and have long believed that Kansas and Kansas communities, with the necessary tools in place to be successful, can compete effectively with other states and countries for the types of economic development projects that can have significant impact on both a region and the state.

Kansas currently has a realistic opportunity to land what can only be described as a megaproject, with thousands of direct jobs, and additional opportunities for related industries and suppliers to also locate significant numbers of jobs in proximity to the primary site. In addition, it is projected that capital investment in the primary site alone could be on the order of \$4 billion. This is an exceptional and exciting opportunity for the entire state and one that requires an aggressive effort for us to effectively compete. Senate Bill 347, now under consideration in this committee, provides a set of tools (“APEX”), many of which are based on current programs, to successfully land this unique opportunity. It would also provide a standing mechanism to support other opportunities of similar magnitude, as they occur in the future.

We encourage the committee’s strong support and timely passage of Senate Bill 347 with amendments to include refundability of income tax credits earned and an 06/30/2027 program sunset, as had been proposed in the original bill.

Thank you very much for your time and attention.

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