

We advocate and elevate our members' economic prosperity and are the catalyst for our community's future.

Located at the crossroads of I-70 and I-135, Salina has a population of 47,000 and serves as a regional hub to our labor basin of Saline and twelve other counties. We are not a metropolitan community, and yet our current level of connectivity and commerce doesn't classify us as rural either. We punch above our weight consistently in terms of investment and innovation, and have creatively leveraged public/private partnerships to make bold advancements in industry, education, infrastructure, and quality of life. We boast investments of over \$1 billion in the last five years, and continue to see rapid job and wage growth.

Our progress in these last few years has included collaborative efforts with our community partners and the state legislature to address many of our key development priorities. This has included:

- A \$25 million match grant for housing development that addresses the tremendous job growth and need for workforce housing. This project will bring over 500 units of multi-family housing to key geographic areas in Salina.
- Three (\$3) million raised by the Salina Area United Way and major employers to create and fund the Early Childhood Initiative Fund; almost \$2 million of this funding was from the Kansas Children's Cabinet. This fund specifically will support childcare workers and expansion in our community.
- The recruitment and investment of Pure Imagination to the Kansas State University-Salina campus and the Kansas Advanced Immersive Research for Emergent Systems (K-AIRES) Center. The first phase of this \$42 million project will bring high tech, high wage jobs to Salina as well as further tech businesses and industry.

While housing and childcare continue to remain high priorities for business, we also are looking at infrastructure projects, as well as a continued focus on access to healthcare, mental health care, and substance abuse services for workforce support and development.



The 2024 Legislative Agenda focuses on eight priorities for regional growth, economic development, community health, and overall quality of life for Salina and the area.



Drive Regional Success & Economic Development



Strengthen a Skilled Workforce



Establish Affordable, Quality Housing



Fortify Transportation Initiatives



Invest in Education



Enhance Quality of Life & Community Amenities



Ensure Affordable Healthcare & Mental Health Resources



Secure Access to Early Childhood Programming & Childcare

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State Funding Requests

Summary

- Infrastructure and improvements are necessary for both Magnolia Road and Holmes Road in Salina. Magnolia Rd. provides connectivity to major areas of industry, commerce, and education, as well as new residential development. Improvements include lighting, multimodal transportation, connectivity, and other amenities that make it safer for driving and walking. Holmes Road is currently a dirt road that provides connectivity to 1,264 acres of land that is developable for new housing (a critical need in Salina). Improvements would include upgrading the street and connecting the area to public water and sewer infrastructure that is not currently accessible.

Total Infrastructure Request: \$21M

Priorities addressed: Fortify Transportation Initiatives, Enhance Quality of Life & Community Amenities, Establish Affordable, Quality Housing

- The Kansas Framework for Growth sets a goal of capturing projected growth in maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) and paint opportunity. The Salina Airport Authority can support State and local goals for MRO growth by construction of two (2) 89K SF wide body MRO/paint hangars by May 2025.

Priorities addressed: Drive Regional Success & Economic Development, Fortify Transportation Initiatives

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State Funding Request- Magnolia Road Improvements

Magnolia Road: Critical Perimeter Road Upgrade/Reconstruction

Magnolia is the main route from the interstate to the campus of K-State-Salina Aerospace and Technology Campus, Salina Area Technical College, and the Salina Airport and industrial complex. The road is a narrow two-lane road with no curbs and no shoulders with steep ditches along the route from the interstate. Magnolia gets high usage of both semi-trucks and passenger vehicles. The area lacks multimodal transportation connectivity to the retail and commercial areas for Salina east of I-135 (grocery stores, Salina mall, eating establishments, etc.).

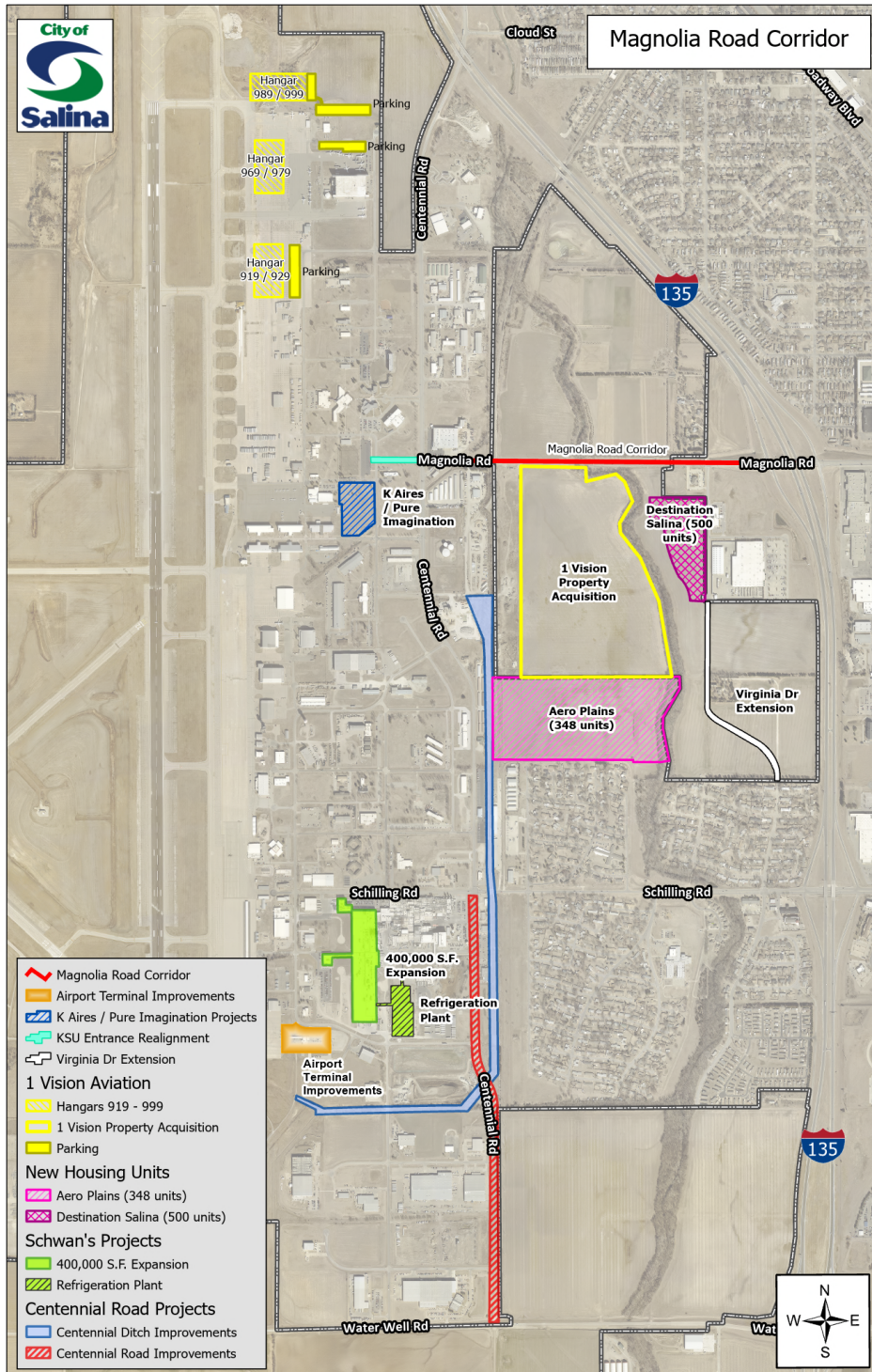
A new residential subdivision is expected to be developed in this area that will add over 12,000 trips a day. Magnolia road improvements are necessary as it becomes a link for students, residents, employees, airline passengers, members of the military, businesses, and industries throughout the City and region.

The City of Salina is seeking \$10 million for one mile of improvements to Magnolia Road. Funding would specifically address:

- Upgrading 4,200 feet of three-lane roadway with medians and turn lanes
- 10 foot hike and bike trail (south side) , 5 foot sidewalk (north side)
- Street lighting, landscaping, public art
- Bridge and culvert replacements
- Channel realignment
- Railroad crossing widening and improvements

State Funding Requests

Magnolia Road: Critical Perimeter Road Upgrade/Reconstruction



State Funding Request- Holmes Road Improvements

Holmes Road: Critical Perimeter Road and Utility Upgrades Required for Housing

Holmes Road is an unpaved road flanking the Eastern most border of the City. The portion of Holmes Road that is being considered for upgrades is a three-mile stretch from Magnolia Road to the South to Country Club Road to the North.

This project would include upgrading the street and connecting the area to public water and sewer infrastructure that is not currently assessable. Upgrades to this section of Holmes Road would create 1,264 acres of development ready property that would encourage private developers to invest in Salina and increase the housing stock to meet current and future housing needs of the community.

The City of Salina is seeking \$11 million to improve a three-mile stretch of Holmes Road. To include widening and paving of Holmes Road and providing water and sewer access to all properties adjacent to the Road. This project would provide the following benefit:

- Create 1,264 new acres of developable land for housing
- Speed up the development process by creating development-ready properties
- Keep housing affordable by removing benefit district costs
- Allow for better design and maintenance of infrastructure because of a comprehensive approach
- Provide funding for a project that does not qualify for typical state or federal programs

The Project Area:

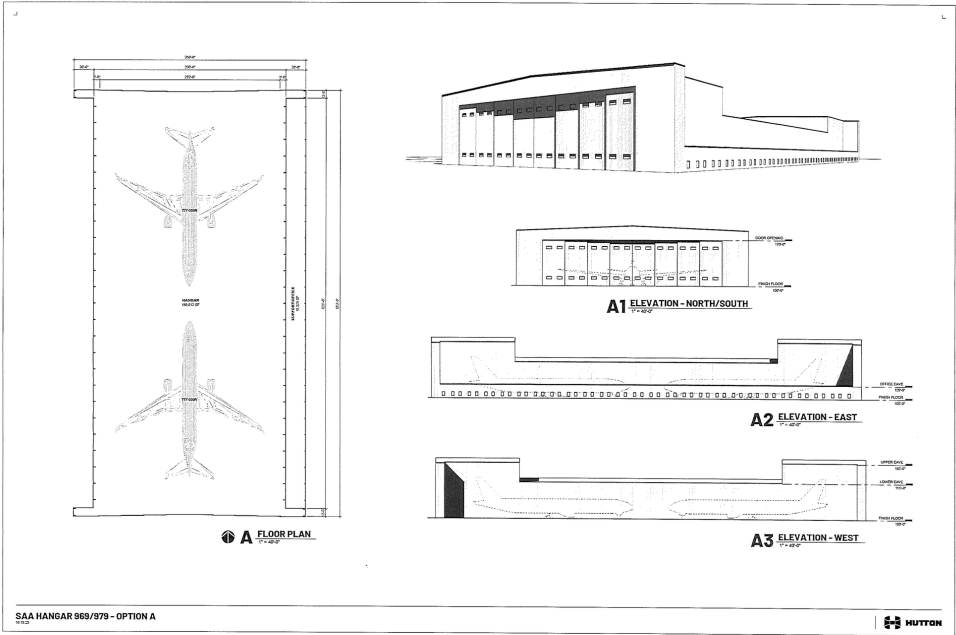


The intersection of Crawford and Magnolia represents 783 acres of developable ground.

State Funding Request- Salina Airport North Ramp Development

Salina Airport Authority North Ramp Development

The Kansas Framework for Growth sets a goal of capturing projected growth in maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) and paint opportunity. The Salina Airport Authority can support State and local goals for MRO growth by construction of two (2) 89K SF wide body MRO/paint hangars by May 2025. State of Kansas grant funding is needed to design and construct new MRO and paint hangars at the Salina Regional Airport in support of MRO growth in Wichita and Topeka.



Federal Funding Requests

Summary

- The State of Kansas and Salina/Saline County have adopted economic development strategic plans that target the aerospace industry for business and job growth. We have the capability to build off the successful growth by 1 Vision Aviation to attract more MRO business and jobs. We support a Salina Airport Authority federal grant application for the purchase of equipment for the Aviation Innovation & Maintenance (AIM) Center of Excellence at SLN

Total Request: \$1.5M

*Priorities addressed: Drive Regional Success & Economic Development,
Fortify Transportation Initiatives, Strengthen a Skilled Workforce*

- The City of Salina has been working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to develop a project that will reestablish the flow of the Smoky Hill River through the community and provide environmental lift along the Old Smoky Hill River channel. The total investment for the Revised Feasibility Study, Design and Implementation of this project is estimated at \$21.3 million. The federal cost share is \$13.7 million and the non-federal cost share is \$7.6 million.

Total Request: \$13.7M

*Priorities addressed: Drive Regional Success & Economic Development,
Enhance Quality of Life & Community Amenities*

Federal Funding Request- AIM Center of Excellence at SLN

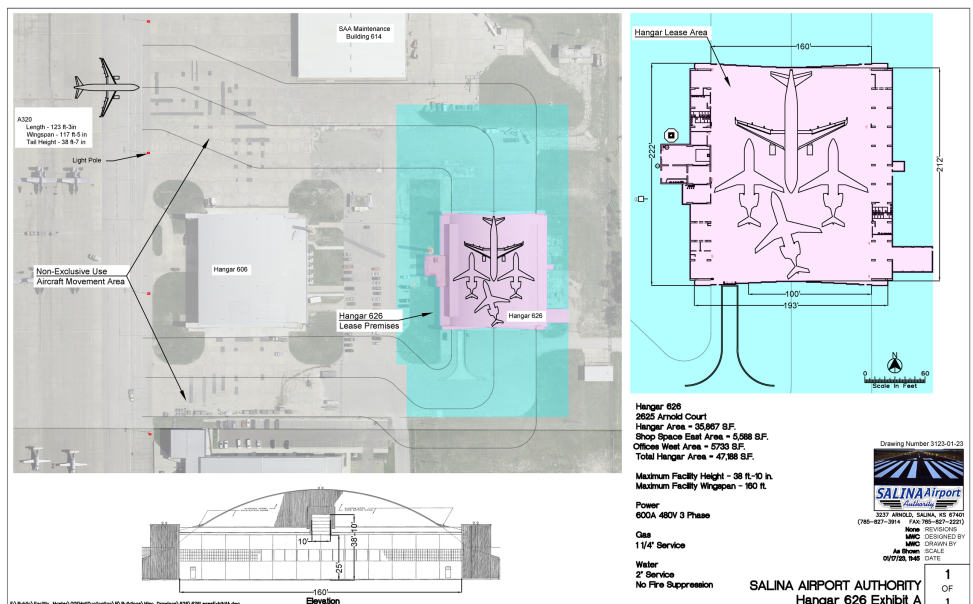
Aviation Innovation and Maintenance (AIM) Center of Excellence

In partnership with community partners and the State of Kansas the Salina Airport Authority has established the Aviation Innovation and Maintenance (AIM) Center of Excellence at SLN. The AIM Center serves as a catalyst for recruitment and training needed to grow a skilled aviation maintenance workforce at SLN and Kansas. Initial local and state funds were not sufficient to purchase all of the equipment and tools needed to train AIM Center students. A \$1.5M, FY23, EDA Disaster Supplemental grant will fund the equipment and tools needed to best train AIM Center students.



Aviation Innovation and Maintenance

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE AT SLN



Federal Funding Request- River Renovation Project

Smoky Hill River Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration

The City of Salina has been working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to develop a project that will reestablish the flow of the Smoky Hill River through the community and provide environmental lift along the Old Smoky Hill River channel. The total investment for the Revised Feasibility Study, Design and Implementation of this project is estimated at \$21.3 million. The federal cost share is \$13.7 million and the non-federal cost share is \$7.6 million.

The proposed ecosystem restoration project intends to restore and significantly increase in-stream, riparian and wetland habitat along 6.8 miles of remnant river channel. The remnant channel consists of a combination of open water, and low quality emergent and woody wetlands totaling about 50 acres in the 6.8 mile length. Upstream river flows of the Smoky Hill River into the remnant channel are limited by the levee intake valve and other obstructions to flow, which reduces the normal seasonal flushing flows that maintain a healthy river system. Aquatic life usage of the remnant channel, and movements to and from the Smoky Hill River, are limited and the remnant channel habitat is degraded. The project includes opportunities for aquatic habitat restoration and creation along the remnant channel as follows:

- Flowing river for 6.8 miles throughout Salina.
- Entrance works, sediment basins and water quality wetlands.
- Sediment removal and disposal.
- Channel shaping, pools and riffles.
- Bank stability and vegetation management.



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State Policy Priorities

Enhance Quality of Life & Community Amenities

Support Community Choices in Evaluating Fair Competition

We support private business operating free from unnecessary public competition but recognize that different communities have responded to local needs in various ways. We advocate that any legislation relieving private businesses from taxes should exempt existing community assets from counting as 'competition.'

Facilitate Restoration of Driver's Licenses for Justice-Involved Individuals

In order to maximize workforce participation as needed by our growing local industries and encourage rehabilitation of individuals following their involvement in the criminal justice system, our community partners support efforts by the state to lower barriers for restoration of driving privileges and issuance of new driver's licenses for those whose criminal activity did not involve vehicular offenses.

Funding for Kansas Wesleyan University's Community Resilience Hub

The Kansas Wesleyan University (KWU) Community Resilience Hub is focused on promoting food security, local food systems, and transitioning to regenerative agriculture for farmers. We support KWU's request for a 3-year, \$1 million per year appropriation to the Resilience Hub for these activities.

Strengthen a Skilled Workforce

College Affordability and the Kansas Comprehensive Grant

The Kansas Comprehensive Grant (KCG) program is both a highly efficient and a highly effective use of state dollars to support higher education and recruit students to our schools. We support efforts to fund the KCG, but we also encourage Kansas legislators to first look to enhance this program that supports students' freedom of choice among all Kansas public and non-profit institutions, prior to implementing any new student need-based aid initiatives that are tied to any one particular sector of higher education.

Investment in K-12 Public Education

Quality public education is required to ensure an educated workforce. Salina Public Schools educates 82 percent of the school-age students in Salina. With over 70 percent of the jobs in today's workforce requiring more than a high school diploma, it is critical that students leave K-12 education prepared for postsecondary school. We support the existing school funding formula, as well as funding special education at 92 percent of excess cost as required by Kansas law.

Increasing Capacity in Technical Education

The technical colleges in Kansas are partially supported by the cost reimbursement model, but do not have local taxing authority. To support the training and educational goals of the state, we advocate for the continuance of the state base operating grant of \$10.5 million that was appropriated in the 2023-24 session. The appropriation provided \$1.5 million for each technical college to support increased capacity in technical education. This increase will support the anticipated jobs outlook for north-central Kansas in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and other high demand/high wage careers.

State Policy Priorities, cont.

Ensure Affordable Healthcare & Mental Health Resources

Expansion of Medicaid

Expansion states have realized sustainability of federal funds for expansion, while Kansas has missed out on \$5.5 billion in federal funding. Medicaid expansion is an effective, sure-fire way to provide non-emergency healthcare, help 150,000 of Kansas residents and workforce afford medicine, and stabilize costs for hospitals. We support efforts to expand Medicaid.

Supporting Kansans At Risk of Homelessness

Increasingly more and more Kansans are becoming disengaged from the workforce due to struggles with mental health, substance abuse and homelessness. Access, availability and affordability of housing and healthcare services continue to be critical for ensuring a healthy labor force and thriving community. We request policy and resources that support local communities' solutions for assisting their most vulnerable populations, and creates housing and healthcare options and infrastructure.

Limit Prior Authorizations

Business owners indicate rising health care costs as a top concern. Prior authorization is a requirement by health plans for patients to obtain approval of a health care service or medication before the care is provided. This was initially intended as a cost-savings mechanism but has gone unchecked and is now becoming a burden to providing patients with timely care. Increased prior authorization requirements from commercial health insurance has resulted in increased compliance costs for 84% of hospitals. Much of this effort and cost is unnecessary. Sixty-two percent (62%) of prior authorization denials and 50% of initial claims denials that are appealed are ultimately overturned. We support HB 2283, a bill that modernizes the process, streamlines the parameters, and limits impediments for patient care.

Fortify Transportation Initiatives

Increased Funding for Kansas Airport Improvement Program

Increased funding is needed for Kansas airports. For over a decade the KDOT Kansas Airport Improvement Program has been stuck at \$5 million. We support an FY 2025 increase to a funding level that meets infrastructure and operating needs of the States' airport system.

Drive Regional Success & Economic Development

Preservation and Funding of Incentive Programs

Economic Development incentive programs are critical to the recruitment of new and expansion of existing businesses. We support the preservation of Angel Investors Network, Promoting Employment Across Kansas (PEAK), High Performance Incentive Program (HPIP), Sales Tax and Revenue (STAR) Bonds, and Job Creation Fund (JCF).

Federal Policy Priorities

Strengthen A Skilled Workforce

Policy and Legislation Regarding Post-Secondary Education Affordability

An educated and highly skilled workforce is crucial in continuing to drive growth, business development, and innovation. Issues with post-secondary affordability continue to be a barrier in labor force development. We support policy that addresses access to financial aid and scholarships, transparency in cost structures and loan options, reductions in non-tuition costs, income contingent repayment programs, and continuous assessment and improvement of certificate and degree programs and their related tuition.

Federal Special Education Funding

Today's special education students represent over 20 percent of tomorrow's workforce. There is no doubt that preparing students with disabilities for their substantial role in society's economic health is critical. While the federal government has committed to cover up to 40 percent of the excess cost of providing students their essential IDEA-mandated special education services, most estimates place the federal contribution at 13 percent. The shortfall places the burden of meeting the federal IDEA law on Kansans at both the state and local levels. Consequently, Salina Public Schools is required by law to divert over 3.4 million dollars away from general education programming to meet this underfunded mandate. We support federal special education funding at 40 percent of the excess cost of special education services.

Control of Payment Arrangements for Post-Secondary Institutions

The US Department of Education has announced that colleges can no longer hold the transcripts for students with outstanding bills in the participation agreement for Title IV funds. This policy change will eliminate the only leverage point for colleges to close outstanding student accounts and will force a change in access to higher education. Current practice at many organizations is to allow enrollment pending financial aid. When the financial aid does not cover the cost of attendance, colleges must bill students and work out payment arrangements. When the students have an outstanding balance, the withholding of transcripts might be the only avenue to ensure payment is made.

Ensure Affordable Healthcare & Mental Health Resources

Support of the Bipartisan Primary Care and Health Workforce Act

In September 2023, the Bipartisan Primary Care and Health Workforce Act (S. 2840) passed out of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions thanks to the strong and collaborative effort of Senator Roger Marshall. This Act strengthens primary care for vulnerable populations and rural healthcare workforce. For Salina, it would fund direct patient care for more uninsured individuals, attract doctors, dentists, and mental health therapists through loan service agreements, provide significant capital expansion of healthcare residency training facilities, and support expansion of nursing and allied health training programs. We support the Bipartisan Primary Care and Health Workforce Act.

Federal Policy Priorities, cont.

Drive Regional Success & Economic Development

Farm Bill Reauthorization

The Farm Bill intersects with a multitude of priorities for our region, including healthcare, poverty, climate change, and school foods. We support reauthorization of the Farm Bill for 2024.

Funding for Kansas Wesleyan University's Community Resilience Hub

The Kansas Wesleyan University (KWU) Community Resilience Hub is focused on promoting food security, local food systems, and transitioning to regenerative agriculture for farmers. We support KWU's request for a 3-year, \$2 million per year appropriation to the Resilience Hub for these activities.

Fortify Transportation Initiatives

Federal Aviation Administration Funding and Support

The effectiveness of the multi-year Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) reauthorization bill is contingent on full appropriations of the FAA's authorized programs. Programs and functions such as the Airport Improvement Program, the Federal Contract Tower Program, airway facilities maintenance, aircraft certification and safety enforcement impact the Salina Regional Airport, Kansas State University-Salina, United/SkyWest Airlines, 1 Vision Aviation Salina, and aviation businesses based at the Salina Airport. We support full funding for FAA programs, as well as specifically requesting that authorization and appropriations bills for the Federal Contract Tower Program should be specific about the program and limit the FAA's discretion over program budget cuts.

We also support the passage of bi-partisan, five-year FAA reauthorization legislation that provides for aviation industry stability, predictable funding for FAA programs and operations and supports the national air transportation system.

U.S. Department of Transportation Essential Air Service Funding

The Essential Air Service (EAS) program subsidizes air service at the Salina Regional Airport for the benefit of Salina, Saline County and North Central Kansas residents. Full funding will allow United and SkyWest the ability to continue to offer Denver and Chicago flights for the region, a crucial support for economic and workforce development. We support full EAS program funding.