

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Senator Karin Brownlee at 8:30 a.m. on January 31, 2001 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Senator Lynn Jenkins

Committee staff present: April Holman, Legislative Research Department
Robert Nugent, Revisor of Statutes
Lea Gerard, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Rob Hodges, President Kansas Telecommunications Industry, Assoc.
Larry Berg, Midwest Energy, Inc.
Steve Miller, Sunflower Electric Power Corp.
Janice Walker, Executive Director, Doniphan County Economic Development Comm.
Carol Wiebe, Hillsboro Development Corp.

Others attending: See attached list

Senator Steineger moved, seconded by Senator Emler, that a bill requested by Rob Hodges, President of the Kansas Telecommunications Industry Association, relating to the provision of local exchange telephone service in a municipality and the administration and regulation by the municipality of the public rights-of-way used by the providers of local exchange telephone service. The vote was in favor of the motion.

Upon the request of Senator Emler, the Committee agreed to direct Bob Nugent to draft a E-911 bill that would provide for a uniform collection point and fee that would be administered independently of PSAPS and the wireless carriers.

Steve Miller briefed the Committee on Kansas Rural Economic Development Alliance (KREDA). KREDA is a coalition of people and organizations in 46 western Kansas counties who have combined their resources, both human and financial to work together for the benefit of western Kansas (Attachment 1). Some of the issues that KREDA addresses are population decline, schools, housing, job opportunities and aging population. One of the most successful things we have accomplished is bringing 108 different economic development entities and 46 counties together as one group. The 108 economic development entities in Western Kansas were deteriorating at the time because they did not have the human or financial resources to really accomplish anything.

Larry Berg gave a summary of KREDA's governance which is comprised of a twelve member board (6 from Northwest Kansas and 6 from Southwest Kansas). There are four committees which are Business Development, Legislative, Education and Public Relations. KREDA is a grassroots organization that does not rely on government money and is self funded through private dollars.

Janice Walker, Economic Director briefed the Committee on Economic Development in Northeast Kansas (Attachment 2). Doniphan County is a rural community dependent on agriculture located just across the river from St. Joseph, Missouri and within one hour of Kansas City. One of the successes for this community is that Seaboard Corporation will be building a plant that is a 140 million dollar project. It will take 18 months to two years to build the plant and will employ 500 people when they go into production. By the end of the third year they will have 1100 employees and at peak 2300 will be employed.

Carol Wiebe, Economic Development Director presented an overview of Hillsboro, Kansas that has a population of 3400 and located 50 miles north of Wichita (Attachment 3). Some of their major concerns are

keeping a strong hospital and medical community, succeeding in retail by enticing customers from a broader trade area. In the area of tourism or economic impact, Hillsboro is the home of the Hillsboro Arts & Craft Fair. The event is on the third Saturday of September and brings in 40,000 people. This is the biggest opportunity to showcase the community and is a million dollar day for the Hillsboro Community. All of the industries that we have right now in Hillsboro have expanded or grown from within.

Senator Jordan moved, seconded by Senator Brungardt that the Minutes of January 17, January 18 and January 19, 2001 be approved. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 01, 2001 at 8:30 a.m.