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To: Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee

From: Karen Endicott-Coyan
Advocacy
Mercy Hospital, Fort Scott

Mercy Hospital, Fort Scott appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of SB 231, which would expand the current Rural Opportunity Zones to include Bourbon County.

Our staff of over 350 co-workers are proud to provide health care services to the residents of Southeast Kansas.

One of the challenges facing rural hospitals is the recruitment of physicians and other qualified health care professionals. We believe the ability to offer assistance with student loan repayment, if Bourbon County is designated as a Rural Opportunity Zone, will be beneficial in our recruitment efforts.

The benefits of living in Bourbon County are numerous. We are excited about the prospect of utilizing the Rural Opportunity Zone designation as an instrument to assist in reversing the population decline in our area.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration in the passage of SB 231.

SN Assmnt & Tax

3/18/13

Attach't # 11