

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 6031

A RESOLUTION congratulating and commending Steve Fossett and Virgin Atlantic Airways upon completing a world record nonstop around-the-world flight.

WHEREAS, History was made on March 3, at Salina's municipal airport as Steve Fossett successfully completed the world's first single pilot nonstop around-the-world flight. The flight was financed and sponsored by Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic Airways, and the aircraft, named the GlobalFlyer, was a slim and sleek composite machine specially constructed by Scaled Composites in Mojave, California; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Fossett is the holder of 62 current world records in flying balloons, gliders and aircraft as well as in sailing. He has swum the English Channel twice, finished a triathlon, competed in the Iditarod dog sled race across Alaska and twice raced in the 24 hour auto race at LeMans, France. He also has twice attempted to climb Mount Everest; and

WHEREAS, The flight originated at Salina because of the 12,000 foot runways at the former Schilling Air Base. Such length was needed, it was thought, to assure the aircraft could get off the ground. Technical support was provided by Kansas State University at its Salina campus as the control center for the flight was maintained at the campus and much support was provided by faculty and students of the university; and

WHEREAS, After considerable delay and worry about the weather, the aircraft lifted off at 6:47 p.m. on March 1. The thin and fragile looking aircraft was loaded with 18,000 pounds of jet fuel. An early complication of the flight was that the plane's global positioning system was not operating properly, but fortunately this system became functional. As the flight progressed it had the benefit of high jet stream winds but it appeared that the plane was losing fuel. After transferring fuel from outer tanks to ones with readable gauges so that fuel use could be more carefully noted, the decision was made over the Pacific Ocean to try for touchdown at Salina. On a bright day with scores of spectators, Mr Fossett had touchdown at 1:50 p.m. at Salina. Upon examination of the aircraft it was discovered that there was 1,515 pounds of fuel remaining, enough for another 3,000 miles of flight. Among the throng to welcome the weary pilot were U.S. Representative Jerry Moran and Governor Sebelius; and

WHEREAS, The media spotlight was on Salina as it hosted not only the participants in the launch of the GlobalFlyer but also a large group of national and international reporters and photographers, local and state dignitaries as well as hordes of curious onlookers hoping to get a glimpse of this unusual aircraft. Needless to say, our visitors received a warm Kansas reception which was accomplished through the planning and hard work of Salina officials and many community volunteers. In accepting the symbolic key to the city from the Salina Mayor Monte Shadwick, Mr. Fossett said, "Everything we wanted was offered to us. That remarkable support was one of the big reasons we're here": Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Kansas: That the body congratulates and commends Steve Fossett and Virgin Atlantic Airways upon completion of the first one man around-the-world flight and notes with pride the part that Kansas and Kansans played in the event.

I hereby certify that the above RESOLUTION originated in the HOUSE, and was adopted by that body

Speaker of the House.

Chief Clerk of the House.