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SENATE CHAMBER

DAVID B. HALEY
SENATOR
DISTRICT 4
WYANDOTTE COUNTY

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE / March 14, 2024

RE: SCR 1620. Approving Creation of a PORT AUTHORITY in Wyandotte County / Kansas City, Kansas.

SUPPORT

Chair Erickson, Vice-Chair Dietrich, Ranking Member Reddi, Members of the Commerce Committee: Thank you for hearing this short but crucial resolution which, if forwarded by you to the Committee of the Whole, will simply allow the Unified Government of Wyandotte County / Kansas City, Kansas (hence "Unified Government" or "UG") to create a port authority in the County.

More accurately, this SCR will allow the UG to RE-create a port authority for Wyandotte County.

Wyandotte (well, Kansas City, to be exact) *had* a Port Authority for a half-century. The authority was dismantled to give latitude to a new General Motors manufacturing plant which too consumed the Kansas City, KS airfield (with one of the longest runway-landing strips in the Midwest) as well.

That Port Authority and airfield share many examples of economic development and success for Kansas. For example, during World War II, the aviation industry (often championed by businessman then US Senator Harry Darby) heavily relied on initiatives and leadership accessibility of the KCK Port Authority.

It has only been required since 1981 that a Kansas entity needs legislative consent to form an authority. Since then, concurrent resolutions have passed the legislature unanimously authorizing port authorities for Pittsburg (2001); Grant Morton, Stanton and Stevens counties (2007); and Stafford (2014). Ironically, the SCR enabling Stafford's port authority was numbered 1620 TOO and passed 10 years ago this week! Proponents to *that* SCR 1620 (2014), with wording practically identical to the SCR 1610 before you here, included: KDOT; KS Grain & Feed; KS Farm Bureau; KS Motor Carriers; others. There were no opponents.

Madame Chair and members, please support this legislative initiative enabling prospects for Wyandotte County to have another viable economic development tool to our full Senate.

Thank you again.

Respectfully Submitted,

- David Haley, J.D. (WY)
- Senator (4th) / Kansas