



**To:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means  
**From:** Scott Wagner, President  
Shelli Swanson, Vice-President  
Kansas Association of Airports, Board of Directors  
**Date:** February 14, 2024  
**Re:** Support of SB 272

Dear Chairman and esteemed members of the committee,

We extend our gratitude for the opportunity to express our support of SB 272. My name is Scott Wagner, serving as this year's President of the Kansas Association of Airports (KAA), and I am accompanied by Shelli Swanson, our Vice-President for this term. We are honored to represent the collective interests of the Kansas aviation community. Additionally, I serve as the airport manager at Lawrence Regional Airport, while Shelli oversees Finance and Administration at the Salina Airport Authority.

KAA serves as the unified voice for all airports throughout Kansas. Our mission is to advocate for Kansas airports by fostering a collaborative platform for networking, education, information dissemination, and research. Notably, KAA has been actively engaged in the advancement of the Kansas Comprehensive Transportation Program, playing a pivotal role in the establishment of the Kansas Airport Improvement Program (KAIP) within the Kansas Department of Transportation. This program is indispensable for the maintenance and rehabilitation of runways, taxiways, aprons, and other critical infrastructure across general aviation airports in the state. Our objective at KAA is to bolster the State Improvement Program to ensure that all public airports in Kansas maintain fair or superior pavement conditions and operational airfield lighting systems.

Over the past year, KAA has been advocating for an augmentation of funding for the KAIP program. Since its inception in 2013, the annual allocation for KAIP has remained fixed at \$5 million. However, over the course of a decade, escalating construction material costs and contractor expenditures have rendered this funding insufficient to meet the needs of the "Air Capital of the World." Collaborating with KDOT Aviation, KAA spearheaded the formation of a statewide task force subsequent to the 2023 legislative session. On January 25th, 2024, KDOT Aviation presented the findings of this task force to the Senate Transportation Committee, followed by a presentation to the Ways and Means Committee on February 13th. The data compiled by KAA and KDOT Aviation underscore the imperative for an augmented funding scheme for Kansas airports to forestall further degradation of aviation infrastructure statewide.

KAA advocates for an elevation of funding for the KAIP program to \$15 million annually. Such an enhancement would significantly expand the scope of projects that can be financed statewide. Nonetheless, we recognize that the exigency surpasses this figure. We implore this committee to

persist in soliciting annual updates from KDOT regarding the status of Kansas airport infrastructure. We are grateful for the collaboration with KDOT Aviation through the joint efforts of the Kansas Airport task force and anticipate further collaboration to fortify this vital sector of the Kansas economy.

As always, KAA remains at your service as a reliable resource, and we respectfully urge the committee's support of SB 272.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Wagner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "S" and "W".

Scott Wagner President, KAA Board of Directors

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle K. Swanson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "M" and "S".

Michelle "Shelli" Swanson Vice-President, KAA Board of Directors