

## **Kansas Department of Commerce Secretary Antonio Soave – Department Overview**

**Prepared for the House Taxation Committee  
Room 582-N, The Statehouse  
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### **Overview**

As the state's lead economic development agency, the Kansas Department of Commerce strives to empower individuals, businesses and communities to achieve prosperity in Kansas. To this end, the Department comprises a variety of programs and services that create jobs, attract new investment, provide workforce training, encourage community development and promote the state as a great place to live and work. This is accomplished through the Department's two major Divisions:

- **Business and Community Development** focuses on growing the Kansas economy and strengthening the state's communities. This is done by:
  - The creation and retention of jobs and capital investment, through recruiting new companies and helping existing companies grow.
  - Using various community development programs (such as the Community Development Block Grant and the Rural Opportunity Zones program) to make Kansas communities, especially in rural areas, economically strong and vibrant.
  - Providing individualized counseling and expertise to Kansas companies expanding their export markets.
- **Workforce Services** links businesses, job candidates and educational institutions to ensure that employers can find skilled workers.

The Department also oversees two Commissions:

- The **Kansas Athletics Commission** promotes and regulates the state's combat sports industry by regulating and facilitating high-quality competitive sporting events.
- The **Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission** is focused on leveraging the potential of the creative industries sector to create jobs and grow the Kansas economy.

### **New Initiatives**

Commerce is excited to announce several new initiatives to help the Department provide enhanced services to businesses and workers. These include:

- A new system of metrics to analyze projects and opportunities.
- Continually updated return on investment figures to demonstrate the value of each vertical within Commerce and the department as a whole.
- Proactive messaging and marketing through newsletters, television advertising, social media, billboards and more.
- Continued focus on eliminating redundancies and improving efficiencies.
- Data driven internal due diligence to evaluate the efficacy of potential projects.

### **New Tools and Resources**

In addition to these internal changes, Commerce is introducing several new resources to help businesses start and grow in Kansas or relocate to the state. These include:

- A new user-friendly website designed to encourage personal interaction with the Department.
- New programs that emulate the private sector such as Strategic Market Entry Analyses.
- New research and business intelligence tools that will provide companies with analysis regarding greenfields, brownfields, foreign direct investment, export enhancement, and external market assistance to locate potential customers, clients and joint venture partners.
- New programs to generate leads from around the United States in target markets.
- Increased internal processing of leads and lead generation.

### **Internal GDP**

To calculate the impact and efficacy of these new efforts, Commerce will track its “Internal GDP,” i.e. the total value of the goods and services generated by the Department of Commerce. This calculation will include:

- Metrics for all economic development incentives.
- Assignment of values for business research tools that are analogous to the private sector.
- Total value created.

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