

February 17, 2016

To: House Tax Committee
Marvin Kleebl, Chairman

Testimony in support of HB 2604

Chairman Kleebl and committee members, thank you for the opportunity to speak before the House Tax Committee in support of HB 2604. This bill would grant sales tax exemption to Gove County Healthcare Endowment Foundation, Inc. to help with the costs for a new airport at Quinter.

Being one of only two counties in Kansas without an airport, Gove county although sparsely populated, its largest town being Quinter, has a County Medical Center which has developed into a regional healthcare hub. An airport just outside of Quinter will enable the timely transport of critically ill or injured patients for needed healthcare outside of the local area by air ambulance. It also will provide a means of transportation for visiting healthcare specialists and for recruiting new medical personnel.

The Aviation Division of KDOT has awarded a grant to the Gove County Healthcare Endowment Foundation for the purpose of constructing an airport just outside of Quinter. Along with healthcare benefits, an airport could be important in recruiting new business and residents to the area.

Since the Endowment Foundation relies entirely on contributions, granting a sales tax exemption for the airport may determine whether the project can be completed.

I support the information presented in Representative Hineman's testimony, and I find it very important to see this airport come into existence.

Senator Ralph Ostmeier, District 40