



## Hamilton County Economic Development

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### RE: Testimony in Support of the ROZ Student Repayment Program

The ROZ program has been an important strategic investment in our future. Hamilton County in partnership with the City of Syracuse, Hamilton County Community Hospital and Syracuse Schools has committed \$35,000 in matching funds towards the local ROZ Student Loan Repayment Program. To date Hamilton County has had 31 applications, 11 of which were from out of state. We have 16 approved applications and 5 more pending. Applicant occupations have included engineering, healthcare, utility, education, finance, accounting, agriculture and management. 42% of the applicants were educated out of state and were looking for an opportunity to return or relocate to Hamilton County and Kansas.

Nine of Hamilton County's approved program participants completed the November 2014 ROZ Survey which yielded the following results.

- 8 of 9 (88.9%) said ROZ was a contributing factor in their decision to move to Hamilton County and remain living there.
- 5 of 9 (55.6%) said they had built or were purchasing a home in Hamilton County.
- 1 of the 9 (11.1%) said they had started or purchased a business in Hamilton County.

The ability to market the ROZ Program has been significant in recruiting and/or retaining educators, health care staff and other key professionals. In visiting with our ROZ participants, they are thankful for this incentive program and it is making a meaningful difference in establishing their future in the community.

Although the number of Hamilton County program participants may seem small to some, for a county our size (population 2,690) these numbers are significant. We would like to express our appreciation to the legislature for its foresight in implementing the ROZ Student Loan Repayment Program and would encourage its continuation into the future.

Sincerely,

Leslie M. Carlholm  
Community Development Director