



March 8, 2024

Representative Shannon Francis
Chair, House Transportation Committee
Room 582-N, Statehouse
Topeka, KS 66612

Re: Senate Bill 272

Dear Chairman Francis and Committee Members:

The City of Lawrence encourages you to pass Senate Bill 272 introduced in last year's legislative session by Senator Claeys. This bill would increase funding for the Kansas Airport Improvement Program (KAIP). Funding for this program has been statutorily set at \$5 million dollars annually since 2013 and is no longer adequate to fund the needs of Kansas airports. This program is administered by the Kansas Department of Transportation Division of Aviation and provides Kansas airports with funds that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airport Improvement Program does not usually fund.

For example, at the Lawrence airport, KAIP grant funds were used in 2023 to help fund repairs to needed taxiway improvements around our t-hangar units. A KAIP grant also funded a study that looked at the various options needed to expand our primary runway and the costs associated with that. In 2024, a KAIP grant is funding the update of the airport master plan. These are all projects that are vital to the Lawrence Regional Airport and would not be possible without KAIP funding.

We support the position of the Kansas Association of Airports to amend SB 272 to an amount of \$15 million in annual funding for this program. This increase will help with the backlog of infrastructure needs at airports statewide. Over 135 applications were submitted in the fall of 2023 under this program with total project costs of \$84 million. \$14 million in project awards were announced on March 5, 2024 as KDOT had budgeted internally for more funds to be awarded in FY 2025. With the adoption of SB 272, this level of funding will be statutorily set.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa J. Sieben".

Melissa J. Sieben
Director, Municipal Services and Operations

cc: Craig S. Owens, City Manager
Mayor Littlejohn, City Commissioners

City Hall

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