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SB283 Opposition Written Testimony Melissa Johnson

Written Testimony Opposing the sunset of HPIP, PEAK, and Low-Income Housing Programs by Melissa Johnson, Montgomery County Action Council

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB283, the proposed legislation seeking to sunset crucial economic development programs such as HPIP, PEAK, JCF, and low-income housing initiatives. These programs play an instrumental role in sustaining the economic vitality of rural communities like ours, fostering growth, and enhancing the quality of life for residents.

Montgomery County and other rural communities rely heavily on these programs to attract and retain businesses, create jobs, and maintain our competitiveness in the broader economy. Programs like HPIP, PEAK, and Job Creation Funds have consistently provided the support necessary for local enterprises to thrive in a challenging economic landscape. The threat of eliminating these initiatives poses a severe risk to the sustainability and growth of our economic infrastructure.

Since 2015, the following Montgomery County businesses have utilized, or are pursuing participation in, HPIP and/or PEAK programs: Acme Foundry, Coffeyville Resources, Hugo's Industrial Supply, MJD Products, SEKTAM of Independence, Standard Motor Products, VSE Aviation (formerly Kansas Aviation, LLC), Precision Railway Equipment, and Bartlett Grain. This list is not all-inclusive, but serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of programs like HPIP and PEAK.

The low-income housing programs are equally vital, providing essential support to ensure affordable living conditions for families that contribute to our community's resilience and social fabric. Removing such support would lead to increased financial strain on families already facing economic hardships.

I urge you to consider the far-reaching implications of discontinuing these programs. The progress and stability of rural communities depend on these initiatives, and without them, we risk undermining the very foundation of our local economy.

Thank you for considering the importance of these programs to our community, and I hope you will support efforts to maintain their funding and operation.

Sincerely,

Melissa Johnson

Executive Director

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