

Approved: _____

Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMERCE AND LABOR COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steve Brunk at 9:00 a.m. on January 28, 2009, in Room 784 of the Docking State Office Building.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Rena Jefferies, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Daniel Yoza, Office of the Revisor of Statutes
Jerry Donaldson, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Dennis Hodgins, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Stephen Bainum, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Tom Thornton, Kansas Bioscience Authority

Others attending:

See attached list.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by the Chairman. The Chairman called for any bill introductions. Representative John Grange introduced a bill about pension reform, contractor pay issues. It was accepted without exception. Representative Brunk introduced a resolution proclaiming February 3, 2009, as Kansas Human Resource Day.

The Chairman introduced Tom Thornton who is to brief the Committee about the Kansas Bioscience Authority. He said that Kansas made a bold move when the authorized the Kansas Bioscience Authority. Just last week the Department of Homeland Security notified the State of Kansas that we are the site of the National Bio Agra Defense Facility. This is a \$650 million Federal Lab. The KBA has supported projects that have created over 100,100 jobs, resulting in over \$125 million in private investment. Today we are in the top 10 of all the states in terms of vitality of our bioscience cluster.

How do we do it? It is by focusing on investments where we have a shot at national and even international leadership. Kansas is the leader in five sectors. Bio materials, bio energy, animal health, plant biology and drug delivery. We diversify in research and commercialization and expansion.

The KBA has hired staff with very strong expertise and experience in the biosciences. The KBA invests in three areas. First is the states research and development infrastructure. Second is NBAF, the defender of American agriculture and last is commercialism, which is consulting with early stage companies. The key to this is making sure that companies have access to the most cutting edge technology and the people they need to grow and expand and be national and international leaders.

Where do we go from here? We are making Kansas a Bioscience leader. The opportunity before us is national and international leadership. We are investing in innovations that can lead us out of the economic recession that we are in. Consider that people from all over the world will be coming to Kansas because of NBAf. We are already pursuing other labs in this area.

Representative Schwab asked if the jobs created by KBA will offset our job losses. Mr. Thornton replied by calling attention to the five clusters. Each of them is absolutely essential to the nation in one way or another. These are industries that are experiencing stable growth and some dynamic growth. The Biosciences are a bright spot in the employment market. The Biosciences will be a key to economic recover but not the only key.

The Chairman thanked Tom Thornton for the briefing

The next meeting is scheduled for January 29, 2009.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 a.m.