

GREAT PLAINS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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Testimony before the House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee, Representative Les Mason, Chair.

Thank you Chairman Mason and committee members for the opportunity to appear today as a proponent for SB 185. I am Michael Johnston and am here on behalf of Great Plains Development Authority. Great Plains Development Authority is a quasi-governmental entity chartered by the Labette County Commission. Its mission is economic development at what was formerly the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant near Parsons. With me today is Daniel Mann, the CEO of the development authority.

Since the Army suspended its operations at the plant in 2005, the Defense Department's Office of Economic Adjustment has made annual payments to help cover the administrative costs associated with the managing and developing the property. The authority has been notified by the Office of Economic Adjustment that this is the final year of those administrative payments.

Simply put, SB 185 would authorize the Labette County, by resolution, to impose a franchise fee not to exceed 6% on utilities that provide service to customers within the redevelopment district. Since natural gas service is not currently available on the property, this fee would apply primarily to electrical service.

The revenue would go to Great Plains Development Authority to assist in the costs of developing and maintaining the property. While Great Plains currently provides and charges for sewer and water service throughout the property, it also currently provides the roadway network and gate security to tenants at no cost.

Thank you for your consideration and Mr. Mann and myself would be pleased to answer your questions.

