



REGIONAL ECONOMIC AREA PARTNERSHIP (REAP)
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PRESS ADVISORY
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**REAP Announces Kansas Affordable Airfares Program
Request for Proposals for Fiscal Year 2009**

The Regional Economic Area Partnership (REAP) today announced a request for proposals for the Kansas Affordable Airfares Program for fiscal year 2009

"Affordable airfares represent an issue of concern to all Kansans, particularly those involved in economic development," stated REAP chairman, Commissioner Tom Winters of Sedgwick County. "By following the guidelines provided by the State of Kansas, REAP will ensure that Kansas businesses can compete globally, families can enjoy the opportunity for affordable leisure travel, and the State can benefit from increased tourism through available, competitive, and affordable air travel to all Kansans."

Under the authority of House Substitute for Senate Bill 475 and the omnibus appropriation bill, Senate Bill 2968, both enacted in the 2006 session of the Kansas Legislature, REAP is assigned authority for administering the Kansas Affordable Airfares Program.

REAP established a selection process and selection criteria for administering the Kansas Affordable Airfares Program. Selection criteria include more air flight options, more competition for air travel, and affordable air fares for Kansas. In making awards, REAP will give highest priority to maintaining affordable airfares to eastern and western U.S. destinations. Priority will also be given to proposals that impact a majority of Kansans.

Proposals will be accepted through June 20, 2008, and the selection of a successful proposal(s) will be July 7, 2008.

"In administering the Kansas Affordable Airfares Program, REAP wants to assure that the program is carried out in line with the intentions of the Kansas Legislature" said Joe Yager, REAP Chief Executive Officer.

In 2006 and 2007, REAP awarded a \$5 million annual state grant to Sedgwick County to enhance a program that saves Kansans on average \$73 million dollars a year, serves over 2/3 of the State and lessens the need for Kansans to leave the State when traveling. The grant was matched by Sedgwick County and the City of Wichita. The program included maintaining discount carrier services to the Eastern destinations and developing a West-bound program.

REAP is a council of local governments comprised of thirty-four cities and counties in South Central Kansas. These local governments have voluntarily joined together to guide state and national actions that affect economic development in the region and to adopt joint actions among member governments that enhance the regional economy.

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