



**REGIONAL ECONOMIC AREA PARTNERSHIP (REAP)**

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**PRESS ADVISORY**

**07/10/06**

**REAP Awards Funding under  
Kansas Affordable Airfares Program**

At its regular monthly meeting of July 10, the Regional Economic Area Partnership (REAP) took action to assure and enhance affordable airfares in Kansas.

REAP awarded a \$5 million state grant to Sedgwick County. The grant requires a local match of 25 percent or \$1,250,000. The grant will be matched by Sedgwick County, City of Wichita, and at least 15 other cities and counties in the region that have pledged funds. The new program will include maintaining discount carrier services to the Eastern destinations and developing a West-bound program.

"Affordable airfares represent an issue of concern to all Kansans," stated REAP chairman, Commissioner Tom Winters of Sedgwick County. "By following the guidelines provided by the State of Kansas, REAP was able to select a program to ensure that air travel is available, competitive, and affordable to all Kansans."

This grant will continue and enhance a program that saves Kansans on average \$73 million dollars a year, serves over 2/3 of the State and will lessen the need for Kansans to leave the State when traveling. This program helps many communities in Kansas, including some of the biggest users of the Mid-Continent airport: Colby, Hays, Salina, Junction City, Emporia, McPherson, Hutchinson, Great Bend, Garden City, Dodge City, Newton, El Dorado, Independence, Parsons, Winfield, and Wichita.

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REAP is a council of local governments comprised of thirty-two 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.

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.

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