

MINUTES
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
APRIL 21, 2014

The House Interim Committees on Public Transportation and Agriculture, Forestry and Economic Development met Monday, April 21, 2014, at 11:45 a.m., in Rogers, Arkansas.

Committee members in attendance: Representatives Jonathan Barnett, Chair, Public Transportation Committee; Matthew Shepherd, Chair, Agriculture, Forestry and Economic Development; Charles Armstrong, Eddie Armstrong, David Branscum, John Catlett, Jim Dotson, Dan Douglas, Jon Eubanks, Jeremy Gillam, David Hillman, Mike Holcomb, Lane Jean, Greg Leding, Kelley Linck, Stephanie Malone, Walls McCrary, Betty Overbey, John Payton, Nate Steel, Tommy Thompson, and Jon Vines.

Other legislators in attendance: Senators Cecile Bledsoe, Jim Hendren, and Bart Hester. Also attending, Representatives Duncan Baird, Les Carnine, Charlie Collins, Micah Neal, Mary Lou Slinkard, and Sue Scott.

Representative Matthew Shepherd called the meeting to order.

Review of Walmart's U.S. Manufacturing Initiative

Joe Quinn, Senior Director, Issue Management and Strategic Outreach, Walmart, discussed Walmart's efforts to bring jobs and manufacturing back from China and Asia to the United States (U.S.). He said Walmart is committed to spending an additional \$250 million in U.S. products over the next ten years and gave an example of a company in New Jersey, Kent Bicycle, which began importing bicycles from China in the 1950s. Mr. Quinn said the company does \$200 million in annual sales and imports three million bicycles per year. Walmart worked with the Governor of South Carolina and Kent Bicycle to bring jobs back to the U.S. and has agreed to open an assembly facility in South Carolina. In 2013, Walmart sales totaled \$476 billion throughout the U.S., with 140 million customers per week. They also reported promotions of 160,000 employees annually, with 75% of its management team promoted from positions as hourly workers. Mr. Quinn reviewed reports for Walmart in Arkansas and provided the following information:

- 73 supercenters
- 14 neighborhood markets
- 7 Sam's Clubs
- 3 Walmart Express stores
- 11 Distribution centers
- \$11.5 billion spent with suppliers
- 52,000 supplier jobs
- \$81 million spent for foundation, corporate, and associate charitable donations
- 48,000 employees in Arkansas

Mr. Quinn said Walmart's core objectives are to grow business with existing suppliers, attract new suppliers, and work to shift existing items to U.S. production. Walmart established a U.S. Manufacturing Innovation Fund with a commitment of \$10 million and, in 2013, held a Domestic Manufacturing Summit with 1,425 in attendance.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:45 p.m.