



K A N S A S

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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The following is a column by Governor Kathleen Sebelius:

Cooperation key to economic success

It used to be that our state's major competitors in the hunt for new jobs and new businesses were our immediate neighbors. Now Kansas communities are in competition with communities all over the world for jobs.

This new global competition has led us to team up with one of our previous competitors in a new effort to take advantage of the assets present on either side of the Kansas-Missouri state line.

Kansas City is essentially one community that just happens to fall on two sides of the state line. Residents drive across that line every day to go to work, and previously a lot of time and money was spent by both states pulling businesses back and forth across that line.

That tug-of-war was counterproductive, as it didn't bring any new jobs to the region as a whole. If we really want to bring prosperity to the entire region, we needed to stop competing with each other and start competing with the world.

We're doing that through a series of partnerships between the two states and between communities on either side of the line. And one of the cornerstones of that partnership is an effort to enhance the knowledge and skills of the workforces in both states.

Kansas is already in the middle of an effort to enhance our K-12 schools, Regents colleges and universities and technical schools and colleges. This is on top of our initiative to make our workforce development system more useful to employers and employees alike, and I've been very pleased by the accomplishments of the Kansas Department of Commerce in this area.

All of this work makes the entire region more attractive to potential employers and aids in our cooperation with Missouri to recruit businesses to the region as a whole. This will mean more jobs, more growth and greater prosperity for Kansans and Missourians alike.

But while we're cooperating with Missouri to bring jobs to the region, you can rest assured this new cooperation doesn't mean our colleges will cut them any slack on the field. That's one area where Kansas still comes out way ahead.

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