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Brigadier General Michael T. Venerdi
The Adjutant General and Director of
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Laura Kelly, Governor

March 13, 2024

Committee on Commerce
Kansas Senate
Attn: Senator Renee Erickson, Chair
Cc: Connie Burns, Committee Assistant
State Capitol, Room 546-S
300 SW 10th Ave
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Senator Erickson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **proponent** testimony on House Bill No. 2745. Master Sgt. Eugene Bradley, Noncommissioned Officer in Charge of Legislative Affairs, will testify on my behalf.

You will undoubtedly hear testimony from other conferees on how this proposal benefits military servicemembers, their spouses and families. While that is certainly also the case for the Kansas National Guard, I want to provide an additional perspective. The Department of Defense monitors and grades states on criteria across "priorities affecting military families and their quality of life."¹ One of the top priorities is titled Military Spouse Employment and Economic Opportunities. The key message under that priority is that "many military spouse professionals must relicense each time they transfer with their spouse. As states implement the provision of the Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act, they can help military spouses maintain professional and financial stability by enacting licensing compacts and ensuring that licensing agencies make their application processes accessible to military spouses."²

While enacting policies that ease the transfer and accessibility of occupational licenses is the right thing to do for our servicemembers and families, it also has broader implications. The Department of Defense considers this in its basing criteria. That is, when a state is being examined for a new mission, this is one of the primary factors considered in the grading rubric. For example, the 190th Air Refueling Wing at Forbes Field in Topeka is competing to replace its decades-old fleet of KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft with the new KC-46 Pegasus. Approximately ten states are competing for this aircraft, and Kansas will be graded during this process on spouse licensing and employment opportunities, among other criteria. HB2745 would help this effort. It is also important in the case of any future Base Realignment and Closure efforts when it comes to retaining current missions and force structure.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the Kansas National Guard and its 7,000 soldiers, airmen and civilians. You can read more about how the Department of Defense grades Kansas at the Defense-

¹ <https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil/about>

² <https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil/priorities/military-spouse-employment-and-economic-opportunities>

State Liaison Office's state policy page for Kansas.³ We will be working with the legislature over the coming years to address the gaps in Kansas policy.

You are always welcome to reach out to me if you need anything. You may also contact my legislative liaison, Lt. Col. Keith Marshall, at 785-646-0011 or keith.marshall.1@us.af.mil.

MICHAEL T. VENERDI
Brigadier General, Kansas National Guard
The Adjutant General

³ <https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil/state/KS>