

March 20th, 2018

Written testimony in support of HB 2416 before the Senate Assessment & Taxation Committee

By: Christopher Patton, CEO of COF Training Services

Chair Senator Caryn Tyson

Vice Chair Senator Tom Phillips

Ranking Minority Leader Tom Holland

Honorable Chairwoman and Distinguished Member of the Committee:

I am the CEO of COF Training Services which provides social and employment services to people with disabilities in Coffey and Osage and Franklin Counties since 1968. I have worked in this field for 38 years.

I am excited about HB 2416 because of its splendid potential to create gainful, substantive employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Many people with various types of disabilities including intellectual and developmental disabilities are reliant upon various forms of government subsidies including Medicaid. It is very difficult for these individuals to find and maintain employment. A disproportionate number of these individuals live in poverty through no fault of their own.

Medicaid is not sustainable. The only way for people who have become reliant upon Medicaid to decrease their reliance upon Medicaid is to increase their earned income through gainful employment.

HB 2416 accomplishes this by incentivizing those Companies that have employment opportunities to work in conjunction with those organizations that specialize in creating &/or in finding employment opportunities for people with disabilities. This would be accomplished by incentivizing qualified vendors to use the products produced by organizations that specialize in finding &/or creating employment for people with disabilities &/or by outsourcing production work to these organizations.

Any bill that has the potential to redirect work that might be outsourced to another Country or another State should be given serious consideration. Any bill that has the potential to decrease the reliance of good citizens upon government subsidies and decrease the associated costs of such programs should be given serious consideration. HB 2416 is a unique piece of proposed legislation in that it has the potential to keep jobs in Kansas while providing gainful employment to an important segment of the population that is too often unemployed or underemployed.

Sincerely,

Christopher Patton, CEO