

**Senate Committee on Commerce**

**Proponent: House Bill 2329**

**Taylor Schettler, Director of Government Affairs, Kansas Chamber**

Madam Chair and members of the committee, I'm Taylor Schettler and I am the Director of Government Affairs for the Kansas Chamber of Commerce. I appreciate the opportunity to provide written remarks in support of House Bill 2329, which amends certain unemployment insurance provisions dealing with the receipt of severance pay.

In 2013, the Chamber supported legislative reforms that strengthened the integrity of the unemployment insurance system in the state of Kansas. Specifically the Chamber supported efforts, which ultimately became law that essentially prevented "double dipping" on severance pay and benefits. The unemployment insurance system is to provide benefits when someone loses their job by no fault of their own. Under old law, someone who was laid off and received a severance could also collect unemployment insurance at the same time. The changes in 2013 clarified that UI benefits should be available after the severance has expired.

Often times, it can take up to 45 days for an individual to begin receiving severance payments. The way the statute is currently written, an individual does not qualify for UI benefits until after their severance is exhausted. HB 2329 is an administrative clean-up to address the issue of eligibility and protects those individuals from falling through the cracks, while continuing to prevent double dipping. HB 2329 will allow an individual who has filed for unemployment benefits to collect those benefits up until they begin to receive their severance payments in order to provide economic security to that individual. Should an individual still be unemployed after exhausting their severance package, this bill would maintain eligibility of unemployment benefits that they had initially filed for.

The Chamber supports HB 2329 to clarify the intent of the 2013 reforms, while maintaining eligibility of unemployment insurance benefits for eligible individuals.

Thank you Madam Chair and members of the committee for the opportunity to provide written remarks in support of HB 2329.



*"...to continually strive to improve the economic climate for the benefit of every business and citizen and to safeguard our system of free, competitive enterprise".*