

HB 2044

Written Testimony

Chairman Tarwater, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to submit testimony on HB 2044.

This bill may sound familiar as it is identical to an amendment I proposed on the Senate floor on a tax bill. The amendment had broad bi-partisan support and went on without objection. A similar if not identical measure went on in the House.

I am pleased this job creation bill in tax credit is getting a hearing in the committee on Commerce. After visiting a business that employs a substantial number of individuals with disabilities and visiting with these employees, hearing how proud they are to have a job that provided health insurance and benefits has strengthened my confidence that this bill will be win-win for our citizens and our state.

I believe this bill with its requirements that 30% of the employees be individuals with disabilities and reside in Kansas and offer to contribute at least 75% of the premium costs of insurance coverage, as well as the limits placed on the total cost of the program, will encourage our companies to use more vendors that integrate individuals with disabilities into the work place.

Visiting with some of these employees and hearing the pride they have in their work and seeing the quality of their products was impressive. I believe this bill will help more members of the disabilities community have the opportunity to live a happier and more healthy and productive life.

When you look at the total cost of this bill please remember that for every disabled person who is competitively employed, they may be saving the state almost \$20,000 each, not to mention the personal pride in increased quality of life that comes from full-time employment.

Thank you for the support of this measure.

Thank you.

Senator Mike Petersen

District 28