



To: House Commerce Committee
From: Kevin Walker, Senior Vice President of Public Policy and Advocacy
Overland Park Chamber of Commerce
Date: 6 February 2020

Chairman Tarwater and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the more than 800 business members of the Overland Park Chamber of Commerce I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2416.

As I've shared with this committee before, workforce shortages continue to be a major problem confronting the business community. At a time when unemployment is at record lows, we must look at all available options to fill workforce needs. HB 2416 supports that goal.

Johnson County Developmental Supports (JCDS) has a long history of providing services in Johnson County and we are proud of the work they have done. JCDS has a broad array of services they provide in support of Johnson County residents and families who are impacted by intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Among them are employment services that help their clients with job applications, job readiness skills and job coaching. With some estimates showing unemployment in the IDD community as high as 80% there clearly is a lot more we can be doing to support their efforts.

HB 2416 offers incentives to business who employ Kansans with intellectual and developmental disabilities. This incentive for the business community, coupled with the great work of JCDS and organizations like them, helps tackle the employment problem from both ends. We think this is an idea worth considering.

We encourage the committee to support HB 2416.