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KANSAS NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION / 715 SW 10TH AVENUE / TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1686

To: Chairperson Lynn and Members of the Senate Commerce Committee.  
From: Terry Forsyth, KNEA Director of Political Advocacy  
Date: March 14, 2019

The Kansas National Education Association appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Senate Bill 38 which would permit school bus drivers to apply and receive unemployment insurance benefits when school is not in session. Currently school bus drivers are permitted to apply for unemployment insurance benefits when school is in session. SB 38 would remove the reasonable assurance for school bus drivers. Removing the reasonable assurance would allow school bus drivers to apply and receive unemployment insurance benefits when school is not in session.

The job of school bus driver requires a specialized license, CDL, of which there is a nationwide shortage. The Transportation industry currently has the 3rd highest vacancies in Kansas. Additionally, many companies are reporting shortages of drivers and a constant turnover rate. A Class B CDL endorsement allows for drivers to operate school buses, dump trucks, straight trucks, but a school bus driver also requires additional endorsements S and P.

School bus drivers are responsible for safely transporting our children to and from school as well as other school activities. There is constant safety training throughout the year to improve their driving skills. When a driver must find another job because they are unable to work low wages then the children, the districts and the community lose our experienced drivers. Allowing drivers to have unemployment will give them economic security throughout the whole year and allow them to focus on their main job.

We stand in support of SB 38 and appreciate your consideration of our testimony.