



February 1, 2022

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce and our 1,500 members, thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to HB 2524 AN ACT concerning health and healthcare; relating to the Kansas department for aging and disability services; requiring regulation of supplemental nursing services agencies thereby; creating the supplemental nursing services agency regulation fund.

The Wichita Chamber stands opposed to this legislation because, among other things, it creates state-sanctioned wage caps. The bill also creates unnecessary and overly burdensome regulations and a registration fee of over \$2,000 for temporary employment agencies supplying nurses.

We recognize the challenges faced by long-term care facilities and others in the healthcare field, especially during the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, we are working with several of our member companies this session to find solutions to these challenges. However, wage caps and increased regulation is not only bad policy that sets a bad precedent, but evidence from other states shows the approach taken in HB 2524 could exacerbate the problem. One of the few states to adopt similar measures is Minnesota, and they have had to suspend their law because it drove nurses to seek employment outside of the state.

Our free enterprise system is the best economic system in the world. Understandably, it isn't always pretty. No one would ever argue that business closures, layoffs, or extraordinary price hikes are pleasant. Similarly, no industry desires to see their material and labor costs increase. However, supply and demand drives costs, both upwards and downwards. Government must be careful not to unduly interfere with the market. Unfortunately, the wage caps and burdensome regulations found in HB 2524 will do that.

We urge the Committee to reject HB 2524. Thank you for your consideration.

Andrew Wiens
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Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce