



**Testimony to Senate Committee on Judiciary
Supporting SB8
January 26, 2021
The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce**

The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce (KC Chamber) urges the House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice to favorably pass SB8 increasing good time and program credits for certain offenders. The KC Chamber, and its 2,000 members and Board of Directors, is a supporter of policies like this to ease the burden on Kansas' prisons, encourage better outcomes for returning citizens and to increase the number of available workers for Kansas businesses.

The KC Chamber supports policies that expand opportunities for incarcerated individuals to receive meaningful educational and reentry programming while incarcerated and, accordingly, receive credit for their sentence upon successful completion of programs. By receiving education and successfully completing programs, the offender is not only demonstrating rehabilitation but is also taking active steps to make himself or herself employable upon release. The KC Chamber not only supports policies that prepare returning citizens to find employment but are actively engaged in helping our members hire folks who have a criminal record through our Workforce Opportunities for Returning Citizens (WORC) Program. In fact, we have a few employers who flat out say they pretty much do not care what the background is of a person, they just need reliable workers. As the economy continues to recover from the downturn in 2020 and as more and more folks retire from the workforce, the need for qualified workers will become ever more important.

While increasing good time and program credits for offenders is good policy, it is important to remain mindful of the need for expanded program capacities inside our facilities to ensure successful rehabilitation for incarcerated individuals. It is a smart investment for the people of Kansas to invest in our inmates-and the programming they receive while incarcerated-as successful rehabilitation leads to a less likelihood of recidivating and increases the chances of the offender becoming a productive member of society. The KC Chamber supports favorable passage of SB8 out of this committee.

**John Jenks
Director, Public Policy
The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce
913.515.1958**