

November 10, 2021

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Subject: In Person Testimony - **Proponent with Revisions** 22RS2356

Dear Chairman Erickson and Committee members:

Thank you for your time today and holding this hearing. ***I am a Proponent of this effort, but this bill does not go far enough and will not protect the citizens of Kansas.***

As you heard in my testimony last month, I was denied a religious exemption and am losing my job on December 6th.

But even if your bill was in effect and I remained employed, I would be subject to **significant discrimination and my work environment would not be sustainable.**

At my company, if you are granted an exemption you:

1. Can't visit more than 1 building
2. Can't eat lunch in the cafeteria, public location, or in any proximity to others
3. Can't drink, not even a sip of water in a meeting (YOU CAN **NEVER** REMOVE YOUR MASK)
4. Can't visit any other location than your assigned building
5. Never go to an offsite meeting

With these restrictions, it is like you are in "prison" and punished every day. This is by design, so you submit to the coercion and get vaccinated or leave. In addition, they are building their case to fire you for cause for being so restricted you can not do your job function.

We have Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act and the EEOC Laws but businesses aren't following them today. We don't need to write additional laws they won't follow.

This bill does not address:

1. Discrimination once the exemption is granted
2. How businesses will be held accountable to follow the law

Where are the damages and penalties? That is the only way to get compliance.

The Answer is to bring SB212 and SB213 to the floor immediately during Special Session

It is within SB213 Section (b) that the citizens of Kansas will truly be protected.

(b) In an action against an employer for a violation of this section, the court may award to the plaintiff actual damages or \$1,000, whichever is greater, for each violation.

THE FINAL BILL MUST INCLUDE:

1. A definition change in the religious exemption from "de minis", in EEOC, to the same as the ADA Laws making more accommodation – **STRENGTHEN PEOPLES CASES UPON VIOLATION**
2. Change the process for litigation to allow people to skip the EEOC process and go right to court, just like in SB40. – **GET AID SOONER**
3. Allow punitive damages in judgments – **HOLD EMPLOYERS MORE ACCOUNTABLE FOR WRONGDOING**

Thank you,

Lauren Shiffman

Lenexa, KS