



House Commerce Committee, Labor and Economic Development
Proponent Testimony HB 2292
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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I am Scott Schneider the Executive Director of the newly formed Kansas Business Roundtable. Our organization is focused on five pillars, workforce development, innovation, healthcare, infrastructure and a civil society. We held our first Workforce Summit this last December in Wichita. In attendance were business leaders from across the state. Some of the attendees are leaders you often see in the halls of the Capitol, some you drive by their large business entities on your way about town, others you read about receiving incentives trying to expand their microchip business right here in Kansas.

We heard from Board of Regents President, Blake Flanders, who encouraged us to set aside our Kansas humility. He identified other states who are aggressively resetting their higher educational relationships as they too understand the population shifts are placing more demand for technically qualified citizenry. Andy Schlapp presented how people have historically followed infrastructure and how the Wichita State applied learning model is actually bringing people to Kansas and retaining them at a 49% rate.

Like this committee, we heard from Melissa Rooker, with the Children's Cabinet regarding the pressures of childcare is placing on the marketplace and what solutions she and her team is working towards. As Rachel Monger of Leading Age Kansas discussed Rep. Brenda Landwehr's idea of resetting a few educational standards. Philip Davidson, lead litigation attorney at Hinkle Law Firm, and others discussed how certifications and licenses act as a shield against liability and a post-Hilburn legal environment does change the risk analysis.

Finally, Louis Rodriguez and Keith Lawing discussed an innovative registered apprentice program they have established to hire and then train an expanded number of information technology specialists specifically for the banking industry. This registered apprentice program is exactly the type of program that could benefit from the HB 2292.

Many of our participants concluded three things; 1) Kansas is behind the demographic curve, 2) simply softening the edges of policy is unlikely to produce the more dramatic results needed, and 3) business needs are unique and Kansas should pursue an "all of the above" policy when considering workforce development changes.