

JOHNSON COUNTY
KANSAS
Developmental Supports

Feb. 3, 2022

To: Sen. Renee Erickson, Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce

Re: House Bill 2219

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony supporting HB 2219.

At Johnson County Developmental Supports, we oversee a network of 2,397 individuals with an intellectual or developmental disability. We believe in Kansas's Employment First philosophy, and through our Day and Employment Program, we help the people we serve find meaningful work in the community.

We are strongly in favor of HB 2219 because we have seen firsthand the life-changing impact of employment for people with disabilities. Legislative efforts that support employers to hire more people with disabilities is not only good for the employee, but also the business and Kansas economy.

According to a 2018 study published in the Journal of Occupational Rehabilitation, "A Systematic Review of the Benefits of Hiring People with Disabilities,"

"Findings show that benefits of hiring people with disabilities included improvements in profitability (e.g., profits and cost-effectiveness, turnover and retention, reliability and punctuality, employee loyalty, company image), competitive advantage (e.g., diverse customers, customer loyalty and satisfaction, innovation, productivity, work ethic, safety), inclusive work culture, and ability awareness. Secondary benefits for people with disabilities included improved quality of life and income, enhanced self-confidence, expanded social network, and a sense of community."

Expanding access to the workforce for people with disabilities is crucial to improving their independence and quality of life, and we commend the intent of this legislation.

Sincerely,



Shelly May
Deputy Director
Johnson County Developmental Supports