

I am Representative Joe Seiwert from the 101st District of the House of Representatives, Topeka, Kansas.

Chairman Highland and esteemed members of the committee

Professionalism

Learned

Based on Facts

Fair Assumption by both sides

Educated

Researched

It is my job to protect Western Civilization

THESE ARE THE WORDS AND PHRASES I HAVE HEARD ON MY MESSAGES IN THE PAST TWO WEEKS

It is my honor to testify here today on behalf of HB 2234 – **Requiring postsecondary institutions to adopt and implement a policy and plan to prohibit employees from using their official titles in certain publications.**

When I first read about this bill I thought I understood it and liked the concept and had in mind to remain neutral.

One of my constituents called me to inform me of the discussion of this bill on **This Week In Kansas** on Sunday morning, February 8th. He actually taped the program so that I could view it. The guests that day were from Emporia State University, Friends University and Collegiate. My constituent, a graduate of Emporia State University, was thoroughly disgusted, as was I, and actually appalled that someone from his alma mater was included in what was presented as a group of pundits and professionals, as they called themselves on this program, dissecting the integrity of not only myself, but several other representatives. As I watched the segment it solidified my resolve to testify on this bill. In a 10 minute program not once did they discuss the bill in the context of having researched it for the merits of its content, how it might be amended to make it better or why it should be dismissed. Instead, they took the posture of bullying the legislators with an attack on them personally for daring to use the legislative process to assure that *only the facts* are presented in media.

It soon became clear that the substance and intent of the bill, the very merit of the content of this legislation, was being lost in the insinuated attacks on the legislators. After being the victim of an eavesdropping incident and seeing the *misrepresented and misinterpreted* facts appear in a newspaper, I

changed my mind. Not only were the facts incorrect but Representative Peck and other legislators were also drawn into the discussion that appeared on channel 10 news **THIS WEEK in KANSAS**. I felt like I was watching a Saturday Night Live skit – a satire on the legislative process and the legislators. It was at that point I decided to get involved and testify.

I read an article in the Hutchinson newspaper written by a Washburn University professor addressing this bill. BUT--- his comments had ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THE BILL, but rather attacking the legislators for proposing it, including Representative Peck whose only involvement has been to introduce the bill. He is not the author of it. So much for research - another newspaper article.

It disturbs me greatly that Representative Peck has been the subject matter of the attacks and the essence of the bill, itself, has been completely ignored.

INFO ON THE TV AD

- 1) These authors of said articles claim they are professionals in their field and are highly educated. By their own admission, highly educated individuals are expected to discuss the facts of a bill and the merit of whether or not it should be passed. Their constant attacks on the individuals presenting the bill removes all professionalism. I expect better from professional college instructors. What does that teach our students; that it is ok to attack an individual over something with which we disagree? Or should we be teaching them to address the issue in the context of the legislation being introduced and discussed in a civil manner? I enjoy reading a learned person's professional view of the merit and context of a specific piece of legislation. I do not care to read the unprofessional criticism of the author of the legislation and neither do my constituents based on feedback I have received from them.
- 2) This bill is no way an infringement on nor does it stifle freedom of speech. Anyone can write whatever they desire for any institution, in any newspaper, magazine or for TV and radio programs in this country. The intent of this bill is not to prohibit or infringe on this right, but to have a policy in place so that the reader or viewer knows the statement being made is **not** the endorsement of the university but rather the opinion of the individual writing the piece. Unless the university accepts that posture, any statement made is an endorsement of that university. There must be an assurance that what they write is based on facts and not newspaper articles or personal opinions.
- 3) With that, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee I offer an amendment to change the wording on Page Section 1 on line 33:

Striking--- which prohibits an employee from providing or using such **inserting**
concerning use of an

And on line 36

Striking--- employees from providing or using such **inserting** *either allow and endorse the use of or and the use of an*

And on Page 2, line 5

Striking - - This section shall not **inserting** *No policy and plan which prohibits the use of an employee's official title shall*

When we watch a TV program, a commercial, or read advertisements in publications, it is not uncommon to read; **The content of this program does not reflect the view of the station, this newspaper, the owner of this business.... Etc. etc. etc.** This is how I interpret this piece of legislation. The author of an article or op-ed piece should not be allowed to co-opt any university as an endorser of what the individual professor, has written without the permission of the institution.

In conclusion my point is this; I, like the university, want our final product be professional, thoroughly researched, reviewed with positive and negative constructive criticism and then make the necessary changes. I have demonstrated such in this bill specifically by adding this amendment as a result of the positive comments and dialogue **BETWEEN** professionals and not because of personal attacks.