

MINUTES OF THE SENATE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Ralph Ostmeyer at 10:30 am on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, 144-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Senator Robert Olson – Excused

Committee staff present:

Heather O'Hara, Legislative Research Department

Connie Burns, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant

Joanna Wochner, Legislative Research Department

Matt Sterling, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Mike Heim, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Senator Steve Abrams

Representative Tom Phillips

Martin Dempsey, Department of Defense

Jeff Bond, The American Legion

Captain Marci Solander, Kansas Adjutant General's Office

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

Introduction of Bills

Senator Ostmeyer requested a bill introduction relating to commercial drivers licenses.

There being no objection from any member present, the Chairman declared a motion to introduce the bill adopted by consensus.

SB 278 - Cowley county; official stone bridge capital of the state of Kansas

Chairman Ostmeyer opened the hearing on **SB 278**.

Staff provided an overview of the bill.

Senator Steve Abrams appeared before the committee as a proponent on the bill. ([Attachment 1](#)) Cowley County is the home of 18 large laid stone arch bridges, built prior to 1910; 17 of which are still traveled on by daily traffic. Cowley County is requested to be designated as the official stone bridge capital of the state of Kansas.

Chairman Ostmeyer closed the hearing on **SB 278**.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Federal and State Affairs at 10:30 am on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, 144-S of the Capitol.

Final Action:

SB 278 - Cowley county; official stone bridge capital of the state of Kansas

*Senator LaTurner moved to pass **SB 278** out favorably and be placed on the consent calendar. Senator Longbine seconded the motion. The motion carried.*

Confirmation Hearing

Chairman Ostmeyer stated the committee was conducting a hearing on the Governors nominee for re-appointment for Laura McConwell, member, Kansas Racing and Gaming Commission. The term is a four year term ending January 15, 2019. The Chairman noted that the confirmation packet had been delivered to each committee member for their review and consideration on the confirmation hearing. [\(Attachment 2\)](#) The Chairman called the committees attention to the information on Ms. McConwell.

The Chairman called for a motion on the confirmation.

Senator Wolf made a motion to move to the full Senate the confirmation for appointment Laura McConwell, Member, Kansas Racing and Gaming Commission, which expires January 15, 2019. Senator LaTurner seconded the motion. The motion carried.

HB 2154 - Authorizing private sector employers to establish a hiring preference for veterans

Chairman Ostmeyer opened the hearing on **HB 2154**.

Staff provided an overview of the bill.

Representative Tom Phillips testified in favor of the bill. [\(Attachment 3\)](#) What the bill seeks to accomplish is to permit private sector employers to establish a policy of veteran hiring practices; the bill is not mandating a hiring preference, but making it permissive.

Martin Dempsey, Regional Liaison Midwest, Department of Defense, appeared in favor of the bill. [\(Attachment 4\)](#) The bill enacts language that offers the option to incorporate a veterans hiring preference policy, so those crucially needed private sector employers can establish preferred veteran hiring practices without risking claims of discrimination.

Jeff Bond, Assistant Adjutant, The Kansas American Legion, (AL) spoke in favor of the bill. [\(Attachment 5\)](#) The American Legion supports employers that hire veterans and older workers.

John Armbrust, Executive Director, Governors Military Council, provided written testimony in support

Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim. Individual remarks as reported herein have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES of the Committee on Federal and State Affairs at 10:30 am on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, 144-S of the Capitol.

of the bill. ([Attachment 6](#))

Chairman Ostmeyer closed the hearing on **HB 2154**.

HB 2155 Extending employment protection to certain military service members who are employed in Kansas

Chairman Ostmeyer opened the hearing on **HB 2155**

Staff provided an overview of the bill.

Martin Dempsey, Regional Liaison Midwest, Department of Defense, appeared in favor of the bill. ([Attachment 7](#)) The bill will help ensure those who serve their nation for all 50 states when called up by the President regardless of where they originate will have reemployment rights to their Kansas public and private sector civilian job after completing the various critical duties they are known for when called by a governor for state active duty..

Captain Marci D. Solander, Executive Officer to the Adjutant General, spoke in favor of the bill. ([Attachment 8](#)) The Kansas National Guard believes this measure can serve to enhance the relationships between employers and service members employed in Kansas.

Representative Tom Phillips provided written testimony in favor of the bill. ([Attachment 9](#))

John Armbrust, Executive Director, Governors Military Council, provided written testimony in support of the bill. ([Attachment 10](#))

Chairman Ostmeyer closed the hearing on **HB 2155**.

The next meeting is scheduled March 18, 2015. The meeting was adjourned at 11:13 a.m.