

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Karin Brownlee at 8:30 a.m. on March 23, 2004 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Kathie Sparks, Legislative Research
Susan Kanarr, Legislative Research
Helen Pedigo, Revisor of Statutes
Nikki Kraus, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Carol Ball, Older Kansan Employment Program
Craig Kaberline, Executive Director, KS Area Agencies on Aging Association
Julie Govert Walker, Executive Director, North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
Jum Snyder, Kansas Silver Haired Legislative Council
Senator Lana Oleen
Mary Ellen Conlee, REAP/Local Area 4 Board

Others attending:

See Attached List.

Chairperson Brownlee opened the public hearing on:

SB 2908—An act concerning the membership of the state workforce investment board and local workforce investment boards; providing for an advisory committee to each local workforce investment board

Mr. Kaberline presented testimony in favor of the bill. (Attachment 1)

Chairperson Brownlee asked if there is a problem that this bill hopes to address. Mr. Kaberline explained that the primary purpose of the bill is to create representation.

Senator Lana Oleen presented testimony in favor of the bill. (Attachment 2) Senator Oleen also attached a chart entitled, "Four Year Comparison of Trained Participants in North Central-Flint Hills Region: Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)." (Attachment 3)

Ms. Govert Walker presented testimony in favor of the bill. (Attachment 4)

Mr. Snyder presented testimony in favor of the bill. (Attachment 5) Mr. Snyder also attached a map entitled "older Kansans Employment Program (OKEP)" (Attachment 6)

Ms. Ball presented testimony in favor of the bill. (Attachment 7)

Written testimony in favor of the bill was provided by Dave Geist, Executive Director, SouthWest Kansas Area Agency on Aging (Attachment 8) and Ernest Kutzley, Advocacy Director for AARP Kansas. (Attachment 9)

Ms. Conlee presented testimony neutral to the bill. (Attachment 10)

Chairperson Brownlee closed the hearing. The committee continued discussion on the bill and the implications for adding additional members. The make up of the current board has been grandfathered by the federal WIA program. If the board is altered, its membership would increase from 35 to 61 board members.

The committee considered action on:

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE at 8:30 a.m. on March 23, 2004 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

SB 445--Fairness in private construction contracts

Senator Barone moved to amend SB 445 to go to 10 days throughout; correct business days on p. 2, then go to 10 days throughout; delete escrow language; move retainage to 10% with additional conceptual amendments. Senator Emler seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The Chair asked if there was a House bill in which this might be put. Senator Jordan clarified with staff that this bill does not affect public contracts, only private.

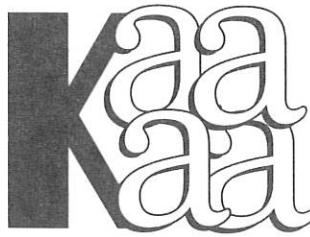
Following discussion, the Chair stated that the committee might need one additional meeting to clarify the issues. She adjourned the meeting at 9:35 a.m. The next meeting will be at 8:30 a.m. on March 24, 2004 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

Senate Commerce Committee Guest List

Date: March 23, 2004

Jim Mc Huff	Kansas AFH-CTO
Mary Ellen, Bulee	REAP
Steve Kelly	KDOC
Dave Cleveland	KDOC
Robert May	HEW Iowa Falls
John Frensch	Boeing
Tom Stillsden	Sen. David Legislative
Uppel Gull	Help. Adv. Kansas Employment Program
Shirley Spauls	North Central White Hills Area Agency on Aging
Bob Tolan	Ks Contractors Assoc.
Barb Reavis	Workforce Network of Kansas
Armand Corpolongo	Dept. of Human Resources
Jim Snyder	Silver-haired Regis Council
Bill SNEED	SAC
Tom Statterey	AGC/KS
Andy Shaw	Kearney & Associates
Chris Goble	KS AREA AGENCIES ON AGING ASSOC.
Juli Ann McMillan	NC-FH Area Agency on Aging
COREY PETERSON	AGC OF KANSAS
Trudy ARON	Amer Inst of Architects

THE
KANSAS
AREA AGENCIES
ON AGING
ASSOCIATION



Meeting the Needs of Older Kansans

1720 SW TOPEKA BOULEVARD • TOPEKA, KS 66612 • 785-235-8734 • FAX - 785-235-8747

To: Senate Commerce Committee
From: Craig Kaberline, Executive Director, Kansas Area Agencies on Aging Association
Date: March 23, 2004

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2908

Senator Brownlee and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today to provide testimony regarding HB 2908. My name is Craig Kaberline and I am the executive director of the Kansas Area Agencies on Aging Association (K4A). K4A's mission is to work to improve services and supports for all older Kansans and their caregivers. K4A represents all eleven Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) who coordinate services for seniors in all 105 counties of Kansas.

I appear before you today in support of House Bill 2908, which relates to membership of the state workforce investment board and the local workforce investment boards; providing for an advisory committee to each local workforce investment board. Currently there is only one local board across the state that has an Older Kansans Employment Program member.

K4A believes older workers need representation on all five local boards and representation on the State Workforce Investment Board. The added representation by someone who has received assistance through the Older Kansans Employment Program (OKEP); a provider of employment services to older workers; and an Area Agency on Aging would help to bring program awareness to other members and increase the possibility of funds being used to provide employment and training services for innovative specialized projects serving older job seekers.

The state's Local Workforce Investment Areas' program performance for older individuals 55 and over for the most part has been very poor since the inception of Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Only one of the OKEP providers has received funding in LWIB III to serve low income seniors. Their involvement in Local Workforce Investment Area III has proven to be successful in the Kansas City area. The state's older worker program has 22 years of experience that can improve the statewide performance numbers of seniors served, trained, and placed into private sector jobs - if additional funding can be obtained from the Local Workforce Investment Boards.

We would also like to see the following addition made to the bill:

Under item (d) it is recommended that the bill include an additional statement to read.....

"Kansans aged 55 and over shall be designated as a special population group under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA)."

I thank you for your commitment to older Kansans. I ask for your support of House Bill 2908.

AREA AGENCIES ON AGING:

CENTRAL PLAINS • EAST CENTRAL KANSAS • JAYHAWK • JOHNSON COUNTY • NORTH CENTRAL - FLINT HILLS • NORTHEAST KANSAS
NORTHWEST KANSAS • SOUTH CENTRAL KANSAS • SOUTHEAST KANSAS • SOUTHWEST KANSAS • WYANDOTTE - LEAVENWORTH

e-mail: k4aed@hotmail.com

Senate Commerce
03/23/04
Attach #1

State of Kansas

LANA OLEEN
SENATOR, 22ND DISTRICT
GEARY AND RILEY COUNTIES
(785) 296-2497



COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
CHAIR: CONFIRMATION OVERSIGHT
STATE-TRIBAL RELATIONS
VICE CHAIR: ORGANIZATION, CALENDAR & RULES
MEMBER: STANDING & JOINT COMMITTEES

Majority Leader Kansas Senate

SENATE CHAMBER, STATE CAPITOL
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1504

March 23, 2004

Senate Commerce Committee
Testimony on House Bill 2908

Chair Brownlee and Members of the Senate Commerce Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to offer my support of the provisions of House Bill 2908.

Prior to 2000, the federal government provided funding targeted for older workers for workforce development through the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). The "older worker" is designated by persons of age 55 or more. In 1999, federal workforce development funds were consolidated under one program called the Workforce Investment Act (WIA). Older workers workforce development funding is in the same pool of money as all other Kansans seeking workforce development.

Since consolidation of funding, there has been a very significant drop in the number of older workers served. I have attached a graph that illustrates the number of older workers served for four program years under the JTPA versus four program years under the WIA. Older workers are a unique population with unique needs, and that age population continues to grow in Kansas. They deserve representation on the workforce investment boards. I support HB 2908 because it affords older workers representation in the consideration of workforce investment programs and dollars.

Thanks again for the opportunity to submit written testimony. I encourage your favorable consideration of HB 2908. Should I be able to provide you additional information on this subject, please contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lana Oleen".

Lana Oleen

Senate Commerce
03/23/04
Attach #2

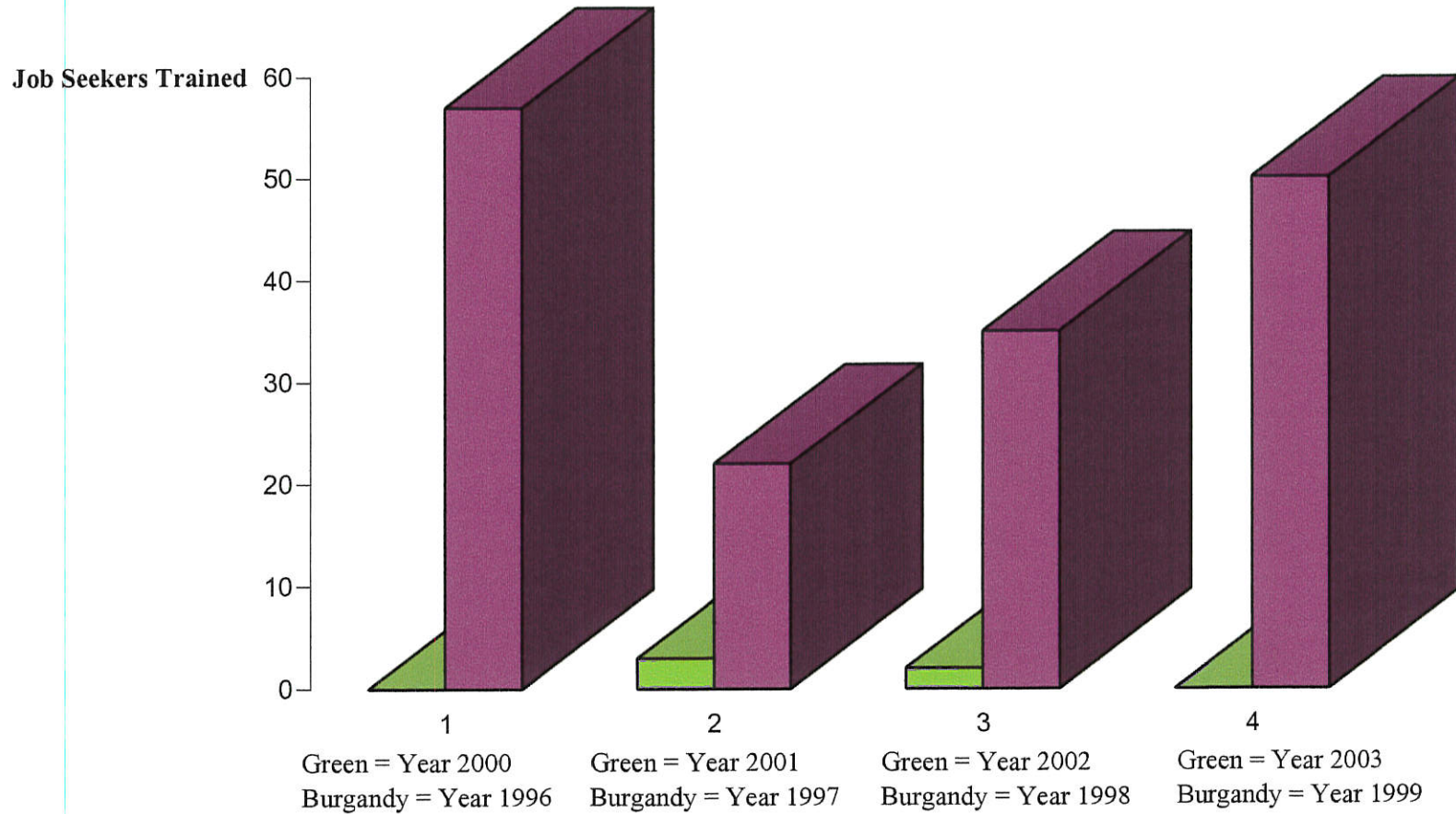
HOME
3000 STAGG HILL ROAD
MANHATTAN, KANSAS 66502
(785) 537-3300

DISTRICT OFFICE
1619 POYNTZ AVENUE
MANHATTAN, KANSAS 66502
(785) 537-9194—PHONE
(785) 537-9198—FAX

STATE OFFICE
STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 356-E
FAX (785) 296-6718
1-800-432-3924 (JAN.-APRIL)
E-mail: oleen@senate.state.ks.us

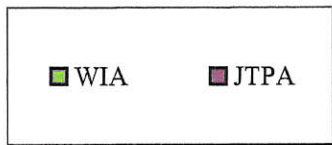
Four Year Comparison of Trained Participants 55+ in North Central-Flint Hills Region Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)

(Sources: KS Department of Human Resources and North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging)



Green: WIA services to low-income 55+ job-seekers provided by Workforce Centers

Burgandy: JTPA services to low-income 55+ job-seekers provided by NC-FH AAA Older Kansas Employment Program



Sen Commerce
03/23/04
Attach #3

Sen Commerce
03/23/04
Attach #3

Testimony
to the
Senate Commerce Committee

March 23, 2004

Julie Govert Walter, Executive Director
North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

Senate Commerce
03/23/04
Attach #4

. Morning.

Senator Brownlee and distinguished members of the Commerce Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you this morning concerning HB 2908. My name is Julie Govert Walter, Executive Director of the North Central Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging. The North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging is a private not-for profit organization which serves older Kansans in 18 counties of Kansas and our services include a successful state-funded program that helps older Kansans find employment in the private sector. I have been with the Agency since 1983 - the second year of this program -- The Older Kansans Employment Program. In addition to my role with the NC-FH AAA, I currently serve as Chair of the Kansas Area Agencies on Aging Association's Legislative Committee and Workforce Issues Task Force.

I wish to speak specifically to the need for House Bill No. 2908 to be passed. This bill concerns the membership of the state workforce investment board and the five local workforce investment boards (LWIBs) in Kansas. It also provides for an advisory committee at each local workforce investment board to review the performance of each LWIB related to services for older Kansans.

Today, I also urge that language be added to this bill that would designate Kansans age 55 and over as a special population group under our state's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Plan.

Older workers need representation on all five local Workforce Investment Act boards and on the state workforce investment board. Having older workers represented on the boards will provide an opportunity for input into the plans and provide a forum for greater understanding of the special needs of older job-seekers. This awareness would enhance the opportunity for funding to provide employment and training services for innovative specialized projects to serve older job seekers.

I can say with confidence that there is a lack of representation of Older Kansans and Older Kansans Employment Program providers on the Workforce Investment Boards in Kansas. The lack of voices of older Kansans and of OKEP groups with years of experience in helping older job-seekers find work in the private sector has resulted in lack of understanding of the service needs of this population group and has significantly reduced federally-funded services to older job seekers in our state.

Some background might be helpful at this point. For years older Kansans had access to services under the federal Job Training Partnership Act. (JTPA). Under JTPA, there was a specific amount of funds "set aside" to address the needs of job-seekers 55 and over. From the mid 1980's an average of \$168,000 was available under JTPA to serve older workers statewide -not a whole lot of money. While most states had problems serving older job-seekers, Kansas contracted with OKEP state-fund providers to do JTPA services. And this combination made Kansas a national success story in the arena of serving older job-seekers. The essential state OKEP funds allowed older job seekers above poverty to be served and the more restrictive state funds served the most hard-to-serve older job-seekers at poverty level. OKEP providers serving older job seekers used JTPA training funds to contract with community colleges and other groups. Job-seekers who needed training or to brush up on their skills could also participate in these sessions geared to the needs of older learners for a modest fee. This model was recognized for its excellence by the National Alliance of Business and by other organizations.

Of course, the JTPA set-aside funds vanished when the Workforce Investment Act replaced them. Accountability and decision-making was changed from the Kansas Department of Human Resources to the Workforce Investment Act system. During the time of transition from the Job Training Partnership Act to WIA --and in the last three years-- all WIA funds have been allocated to the Local Workforce Investment Boards. Unfortunately, these groups have not given a lot of attention to the needs of older job-seekers in our state. In June 2000, Human Resources Secretary Richard Beyer and Secretary on Aging Connie Hubbell wrote a joint letter urging local Workforce Investment Boards to attend to the needs of older job-seekers and fund services through OKEP providers for this purpose. However, since the inception of WIA, only one Local Workforce Investment Board--Region III-- has allocated WIA funds to an OKEP provider. The bottom line is that statistics show that WIA monies are, at best, only minimally serving older job-seekers through the current Workforce Investment Act network.

During this time, neither OKEP program leaders nor the older workers who have benefited from help available through one of the state's Older Kansans Employment Programs since 1982 have been provided any significant voice at the decision making table since the inception of the Workforce Investment Act. Under Governor Graves' administration, the Secretary of Human Resources, Secretary Beyer was the only designated voice for older workers and older worker programs on the statewide Workforce Network of Kansas Board. Time and again, during the past three years, the Kansas Department on Aging and the Older Worker Task Force - groups familiar with OKEP and concerned about older workers-- have asked that positions on this statewide board include OKEP leaders with experience and knowledge about the special needs and placement issues affecting older job-seekers in the private sector. Unfortunately, these suggestions have not been accepted.

At the local level, groups representing existing OKEP programs or OKEP customers are not regularly included on local Workforce boards. And, even though the Workforce Investment Act networks at either the state or local levels-with the exception of LWIB III--have not allocated monies or contract with OKEP groups that serve job seekers 55 or over, OKEP organizations are asked to participate in the "One Stop" centers. Most are expected to pay a "fair share" portion of the monthly rent and other operating expenses for these centers.

Currently the five Older Kansans Employment Programs in Kansas -using only the state funds available to us-- extend help to any job-seeker 55 and older. In 2002, these programs helped 1,103 individuals find part time and full time employment. Forty-seven counties are served under this program. The major trade areas served include: Wichita, Topeka, Chanute, Manhattan, Junction City, Emporia, Salina and Dodge City.

The 55 plus group is the fastest growing population segment in our state. Older job seekers face serious challenges when searching for employment. Unfortunately, age discrimination is a reality in our society. Employers routinely devalue individuals on the basis of age, rather than recognizing the fact that with added years come added experience and wisdom.

Older Kansans seek employment to meet their living expenses, to keep up with unanticipated and exorbitant costs of prescription drugs for themselves or for a family member. Sometimes they have other reasons for wanting a job. As a provider of services for older Kansans for 22 years, I can tell you that often the older Kansans looking for work lack self-confidence. Most need help with the tools needed to ensure a successful job-search. Many need to update their skills or need some re-training--such as keyboard or computer skills--in order to fit into today's workforce. Older job seekers have special and specific needs and confront significant barriers that their younger counterparts do not have to face. Older Kansans need to be designated as a special population in the WIA state plan.

More than just an income, a job often gives meaning and purpose to life. The essential state funds for OKEP help older job-seekers-regardless of income-- recognize the skills they have to offer. Our experienced staff gives them self-confidence to sell their skills in the marketplace. Staff also provide job-seekers who come to us with important information on other matters that many older Kansans need whether they are seeking employment or not-information about Medicare, free or low-cost prescription drugs and other helpful benefits.

My message today:

* Support House Bill 2908 concerning expanding the membership of the state Workforce Investment Board and Local Workforce Investment Boards and the creation of advisory groups to review the service performance of the LWIBs

* Add the necessary language that will designate Kansans age 55 and over as a special population group in the current Kansas Workforce Investment Act plan.

Thank you.

HOUSE BILL 2908
REMARKS OF
JIM SNYDER
MARCH 23, 2004
Senate Commerce Committee

Members of the Commerce Committee. My name is Jim Snyder and I am a member of the Kansas Silver Haired Legislative Council. I appear in favor of House Bill 2908.

The Silver Haired Legislature, during its 2003 Session approved what has become HCR 5037. This is our way of supporting older Kansans who wish to...or have to...reenter the work force. So, we have been active in this area.

During our recent successful attempts to retain the Kansas-funded Older Kansans Employment Program, it was made quite clear to us that the Federally-funded program -- Workforce Investment Act (WIA)-- is still in the process of fine-tuning and could use some input from areas as stated in House Bill 2908. We also understand that Kansas can add these people by statute.

For instance, Attachment #1 illustrates the success of the Older Kansan Employment Program in getting jobs for those needing them, and doing it at about 1/3 the cost of the Federal Workforce Investment Program. Therefore, with the addition of some experienced people to the Local WIA Boards, this program could be more efficient and help more people who need to get back into the workforce. Additionally, when this happens, it helps provide more funds for Kansas in the form of Income Taxes and Sales Taxes. So, you can see, it is a win/win situation.

Attachment #2--map of Kansas--shows the activities of the present Older Kansas Employment Program and where they are located. By adding experienced people to the Workforce Boards, we feel that improvements will be made in the present areas, and expansion into the Counties not presently covered (those with nothing showing), will be encouraged.

We also would recommend an amendment to this bill by inserting after the period in line 15, the sentence "Kansans aged 55 and over shall be designated as a special target population under the Workforce Investment Act." This amendment would help define a segment of our fellow citizens who have every intention of remaining active in their lives. This language was suggested in the House Committee, but they decided it could be added in the Senate, should you so desire.

I urge your support of House Bill 2908. Thank you.

Jim Snyder, 343 SW Elmwood, Topeka, KS 66606 (785)354-4891
rsnyder409@aol.com

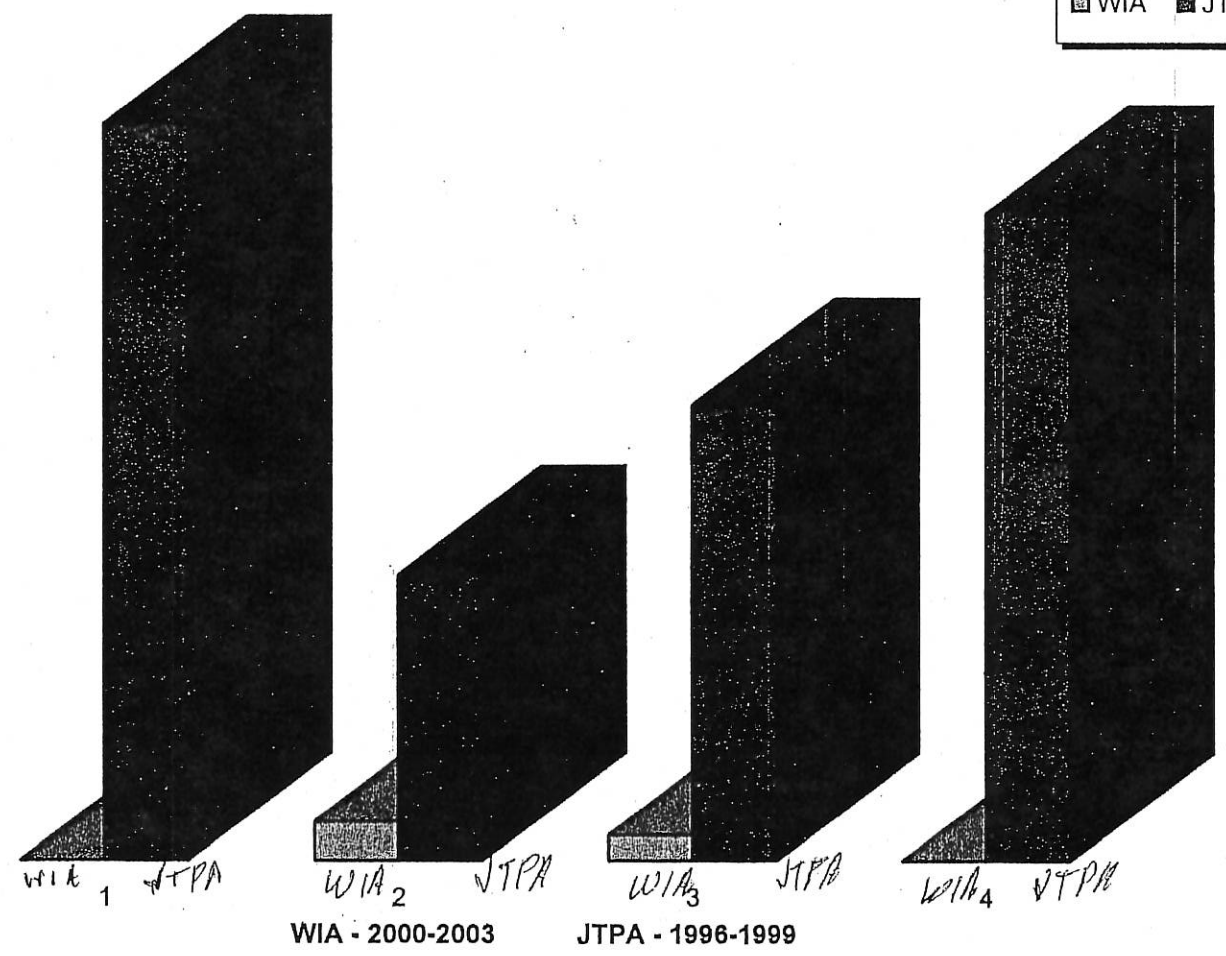
Senate Commerce
03/23/04
Attach # 5

Four Year Comparison of Trained Participants 55+ in North Central-Flint Hills Region Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA)

Job Seekers Trained

60
50
40
30
20
10
0

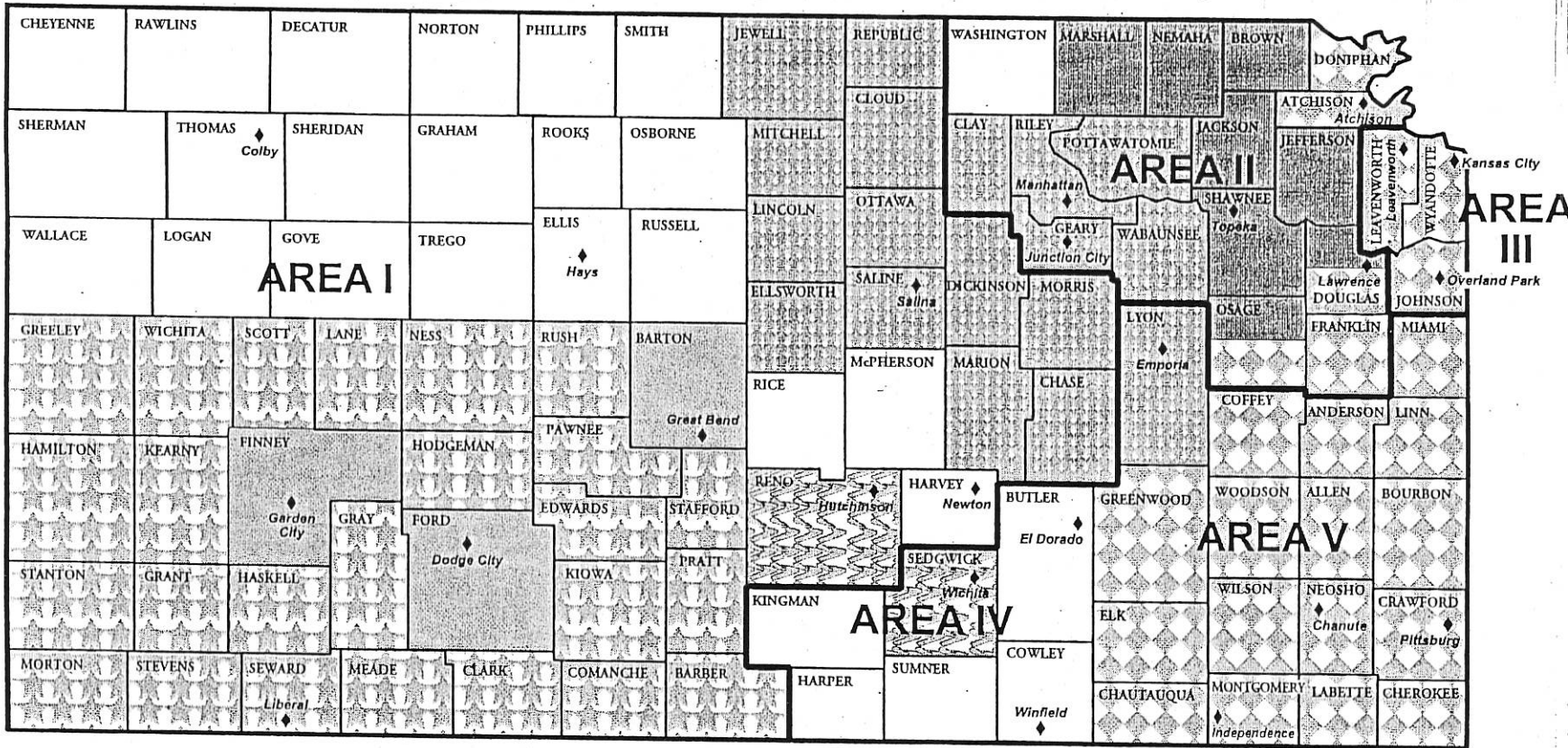
WIA JTPA



WIA - 2000-2003

JTPA - 1996-1999

OLDER KANSANS EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM (OKEP)



LEGEND ◆ Job Service Local Office Service Areas

 Southwest Kansas Area Agency on Aging

 Let's Help, Inc.

 Senior Services, Inc. of Wichita

 Southeast Kansas Area Agency on Aging

 North Central Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging

 Service Area (no services)

Sen Commerce
03/23/04
Attach #6



Service Area Map

ATTACHMENT H

-17-

Sen Commerce
03/23/04
Attach #6

Handwritten signature/initials

Carol Ball
234 Kansas Ave.
Older Kansan Employment Program
Let's Help, Inc.
PO Box # 2492
Topeka, Kansas 66601-2492
(785) 234 - 6208 ext.222

House Bill # 2908

The purpose of this is to state that we work with Older Kansans, my clients are 55 and older and I have worked with them for over 13 years. We need to have your support to change the member ship structure of the State Workforce Investment Board and local workforce investment boards to include the state's Areas Agencies on Aging and the Older Kansans Employment Programs. Each local workforce investment board would be required to establish an advisory committee consisting of older worker advocates and older worker participants to review the board's service plan's and the board's performance.

All older workers need to be represented and I believe this will help all older persons. I say this clear all older workers 55 and older, it is so difficult now with the number filing bankruptcy and giving up it is necessary to include all older workers. If not now it will be too late.....

Senati Commerce
03/23/04
Attach # 7



P.O. Box 1636
240 San Jose Drive
Dodge City, KS 67801

(620) 225-8230
FAX (620) 225-8240
www.k4s.org/aaa/sw/

March 22, 2004

TO: Senate Commerce Committee

FROM: Dave Geist, Executive Director



RE: Testimony of HB 2908 - An Act concerning the membership of the state workforce investment board and local workforce investment boards.

Senator Browlee and distinguished members of the Commerce Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony in support of HB 2908.

Our interest in this bill - The SouthWest Kansas Area Agency On Aging (SWKAAA) is an umbrella agency that administers an older workers program from a grant provided by the Kansas Department of Human Resources. This program provides assistance to individuals age 55 and older seeking employment in non-subsidized private employment.

Concerning HB 2908 - Currently there are no individuals, organizations or businesses on the local workforce investment board (WIA) that represents older workers. Their primary focus these past two years has been with youth and college aged workers. Yet the fast growing population segment in the state is the 55 plus population. This is especially true in the rural areas of Kansas where we are seeing the out migration of young people to larger urban cities. With the addition of these new members the local board can begin to address the needs of this other population group, something we feel is currently not occurring in western Kansas.

Designate older workers as a special population - I would also encourage this Committee to add language to this bill designating the older worker as a special population under the WIA state plan. Older workers have special needs and confront significant barriers that their young counterparts do not have to face. This language would assist these people by equipping them with the tools that they need to secure gainful employment, as well as, providing employers with better trained candidates. What better outcomes could you ask for?

In conclusion - The SouthWest Kansas Area Agency On Aging supports HB 2908 concerning the membership of the state Workforce Investment Board and Local Investment Boards and also encourages this committee to designate Kansans age 55 and over as a special population group in the current Kansas Workforce Investment Act plan.

Thank you. If you have questions please call me at (620) 225-8230 during regular business hours.

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Senate Commerce
03/23/04
Attach # 8

kansas

March 23, 2004

Senator Brownlee, Chair
Senate Commerce Committee
HB 2903-Local Workforce Investment Boards

Good morning Chairman Brownlee and Members of the Senate Commerce Committee. My name is Ernest Kutzley and I am the Advocacy Director for AARP Kansas. AARP Kansas represents the views of our more than 350,000 members in the state of Kansas. Thank you for this opportunity to express our comments and support for HB 2903.

As part of our national employment policy, AARP is committed to expanding employment opportunities and promoting job security for workers of all ages and to removing all barriers to equal employment opportunity. These goals include increasing employment opportunities and providing access to jobs through training, retraining and other programs designed both to encourage older workers to remain in the labor force and to improve the job security of all working Americans.

More than 80 percent of AARP's youngest members (ages 50 to 54) are employed and forty four percent of all AARP members work full or part time.

The U.S. labor force is aging and becoming more ethnically diverse. Historically, older workers have found themselves at a disadvantage when looking for work, seeking a promotion or participating in training programs. Widespread labor and skills shortages, coupled with a decline in the number of labor-force participants between the ages of 35 and 44, may prompt employers to find innovative ways of encouraging older workers to continue working. Training and retraining programs will be increasingly necessary to access and develop the employment potential of the aging workforce. The demand for training also will increase in the face of rising unemployment among older workers, who often encounter formidable employment barriers in their search for work.

By 2010 there will be a serious labor shortage as baby boomers begin to retire and fewer younger workers are available because of slow population growth between 1985 and 1996. Unless we can keep older, productive people working, the shrinking labor force will slow down the economy. Our research tells us that older workers will continue to have a prominent and increasing role in the labor force in coming decades. They will step up and fill those jobs that are most needed by employers.

AARP believes that states and localities should involve older people in planning the use of job training funds, especially by including older people and retrained workers on state and local advisory boards.

Therefore, AARP requests that older workers be represented on all five local Workforce Investment Boards and also on the State Workforce Investment Board. This representation would bring awareness to other members and increase the possibility of funds being used for employment and training services for older workers since only one Older Kansas Employment Program provider has received funding to serve low income seniors.

Thank you for this opportunity to present our comments and we respectfully ask for your support of HB 2908.

Thank you
Ernest Kutzley
(785) 234-1363

Senate Commerce
03/23/04
Attach # 9

TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE

ON BEHALF OF THE WORKFORCE ALLIANCE AND REAP

RE: The Local Area IV Workforce Investment Act Board of Directors

March 23, 2004

I am Mary Ellen Conlee representing the Regional Economic Area Partnership (REAP), an organization of 33 cities and counties in south central Kansas that have joined together to support economic development in the region. As part of addressing economic development challenges, REAP accepted the Chief Elected Officials (CEO) responsibility for the Local Area IV Workforce Investment Board. The CEO group holds the underlying fiscal responsibility for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funding expenditures and is responsible for selecting members of the Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB). In addition to acting as a contract lobbyist for REAP, my company has a contract to act as the management team for the Board of Directors activities for the Local Area IV.

WIA legislation includes several categories that need to be represented on local boards and, in addition, requires that the board be at least 51% private sector. WIA local area boards are charged with understanding the current and future demand for jobs and directing training dollars toward those demand occupations. Additionally, the local boards are charged with bringing the many components of federally funded training programs together into one stop operations to efficiently allocate scarce resources in serving those who are unemployed or underemployed.

The Local Area IV LWIB has 41 members, 21 private sector and 20 representing the following categories:

- Labor
- Community Organizations
- Economic Development
- Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, Unemployment Insurance and Dislocated Workers
- Adult Education or School to Career
- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Senior Employment Services
- Welfare to Work Training Programs
- Migrant/Seasonal Farm Workers
- Native American Employment Programs
- Local Higher Education
- Local K-12
- Chief Elected Officials

*Senate Commerce
03/23/04
Attach #10*

In addition, the Board needs to include a balance of individuals from the 6 official and 2 unofficial counties in our Region. Local Area IV has an individual, Beverly Morlan, Executive Director of the American Red Cross who represents a senior employment program. HB 2908 would require that the representative be from a different kind of senior employment program. As you can see from the list, the WIA boards do not have representation from consumers. Instead, the boards are designed to bring educational institutions, local government and state officials, employment program operators and economic development agencies together with CEOs of local businesses to assure that use of training funds responds to business demand.

HB 2908 would require that two senior employment representatives be added to the Board, one a provider and one a consumer, representing an agency that serves persons seeking employment through the older Kansans employment program. Then the bill requires an additional representative from the local Area Agency on Aging. REAP questions adding three more people to the board, which will then require three more private sector representatives. It is understood that we could ask our current Senior Employment representative to resign and replace her with one of the designated new members.

The bill, also, requires an advisory committee to the board that singles out services to older Kansans. In Local Area IV we have tried to interact with older Kansans though not in the specific ways required by HB 2908. In addition to Ms Morlan representing Senior Employment, the Director of the older Kansans Employment Program at Senior Services, Inc. in Wichita participates on the Communications and Marketing Committee and interacts at least weekly with the WIA one stop operation. The one stop operation has a program advisory committee that is open to all programs that deliver services in our region. While the local Area Agency on Aging is not directly represented, the Chair of the Sedgwick County Commission serves on both the LWIB and the CEO Boards. In our area the Area Agency on Aging director is a Sedgwick County employee.

I was particularly surprised to see this proposed legislation as earlier this year in the appropriations process, representatives of the older Kansans employment programs testified against a move to shift their funding from the state general fund to WIA. The older Kansans employment programs provide one-on-one services to older Kansans in need of a helping hand. The services they provide are targeted and effective. Appropriations and Ways and Means Committee members agreed that the funding should be independent from WIA.

I believe that those legislators were correct. To bring these programs directly under the WIA umbrella would be a mistake. WIA funding is especially targeted to training and retraining. As I understood testimony earlier this year, older Kansans employment programs stress updating skills and assisting older job seekers with looking for employment. The program directors and counselors spend significant time helping employers understand the value in hiring the right older worker.

Therefore, I would question why two representatives from the older Kansans employment programs should be part of a Board that they specifically asked not to be funded by. During the two years that I have been associated with Local Area IV, the Area Agency on Aging has not approached us with concerns or a desire to be involved.

Nevertheless, we see HB 2908 as a wake up call. We recognize in Local Area IV that there should be more interaction with groups that serve and advocate for older Kansans, but at the same time we support the independence of Senior Services, Inc. and the unique blend of services it provides. If it is the will of the legislature that local boards need formal advisory committees to assure a connection between the separately funded older Kansans employment programs and WIA funded training programs, Local Area IV will comply. Another way to address this issue would be to call on the state Workforce Network of Kansas Board, the policy board for the state, to review differences in services to older Kansans throughout the state so as to set statewide policy.

I respectfully submit that the formal addition of one person, instead of, from the categories included in the bill would integrate better with the series of required representation categories found in WIA legislation.

Thank you for listening to our concerns.