



# Goodwill Industries of Kansas, Inc.

Wichita, KS • 3351 N. Webb Road, 67226 • P.O. Box 8169, 67208 | Phone: 316.744.9291 • Fax: 316.744.1428  
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## House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice

### Representative Lewis – Chair

#### Hearing on House Bill 2327

Written proponent testimony from Goodwill Industries of Kansas

February 11, 2025

Goodwill Industries of Kansas, Inc. stands in support of House Bill 2327.

For over 65 years, Goodwill Industries of Kansas, Inc. has been a tireless supporter of individuals with barriers to employment, transforming lives through education, training, and employment. For the least four years we have operated a growing Re-Entry program to assist individuals who are justice-involved to reclaim their lives.

Goodwill's Re-entry program is a partnership that consists of public, private, and education partners coming together to offer life skills, a high school diploma, industry-recognized college credentials, employment preparation, and post-employment support. The partnership consists of Goodwill Industries of Kansas, WSU Tech, the Kansas Board of Regents, Sedgwick County Corrections, the Department of Commerce, the City of Wichita, and various employers such as JR Custom Metals and Textron Aviation.

We believe that a certificate of employability, issued by the State of Kansas, will improve the confidence levels of justice-involved individuals and employers alike. Generally speaking, Individuals re-entering into society after incarceration are asked to disregard the social norms that provided safety while incarcerated, because they rarely apply in the world of modern employment. This requires a learning curve and can be difficult when one is also learning how to address the past on a job application or resume, discuss in an interview, and/or navigate common barriers such as lack of transportation, lack of childcare, housing insecurity, and food insecurity.

The proposed certification shows a tangible endorsement from the State of Kansas that recognizes education accomplishments and shows that the individual has made use of the available resources to better themselves. It is the belief of Goodwill Industries of Kansas that these are traits that are likely to be valued by employers, thus bridging a communication gap and increasing opportunities for those who have put in the work.

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Chris Stanyer – Chief Mission Officer  
Goodwill Industries of Kansas  
316-744-9291 or [cstanyer@goodwillks.org](mailto:cstanyer@goodwillks.org)



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