

SENATE COMMITTEE ON FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS  
THURSDAY, MARCH 6  
WRITTEN ONLY  
OPPONENT TESTIMONY SB196

Chairman and Committee Members, thank you for allowing us to provide testimony today. Our four-community coalition of Chambers of Commerce, representing Manhattan, Emporia, Topeka and Lawrence, are writing today to voice concern over SB196. United we represent the interests of nearly 3,500 business and 600,000 in our respective communities.

Workforce development is a shared priority among our region and state; with legally authorized workers employed by a variety of industries. In a time where we are working tirelessly to lessen the burden of regulation on businesses, and spur economic growth we feel that this measure would counteract this effort. It is already illegal for a business to hire someone not allowed to work in the United States.

While we understand that this measure is designed to assist with compliance, we feel that it unfairly puts the burden of enforcement on employers. This could result in down-the-road actions to the detriment of the business that include fines, audit, and an opportunity cost of spending time trying to validate identification of the workers with the system.

It is our shared regional priority of workforce development that incorporates all elements of a strong quality of life, and seeks to address issues in housing, homelessness, immigration, childcare and early education that we feel compelled to urge the committee to not move forward with SB196.

Thank you for taking our position into full consideration.

Respectfully submitted by:

Juliet Abdel, MS, IOM

President

Greater Topeka Chamber

On Behalf of M.E.T.L. Coalition

**METL**

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A coalition of local Chambers of Commerce