



*Board of Directors*

Daniel M. Carney, Chair  
Deryl K. Schuster, Vice Chair  
Daniel J. Taylor, Treasurer  
Michael C. Burrus, Secretary  
Joyce Smith, Assistant Secretary  
John F. "Jack" Jonas Jr., Founder &  
President Emeritus  
Patrick T. Jonas, President & CEO

Dan F. Augustin  
Robert P. Daniels  
Vivian M. King  
Linus C. Ohaebosim  
Patricia M. Patterson  
Donald D. Sbarra  
William A. Simon  
Kenneth J. Wagnon

Chairman Rhoades and Members of the House Appropriation Committee, my name is Dan Augustin, long time board member of the Cerebral Palsy Research Foundation of Kansas and am currently engaged in farming and ranching operations. I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2442.

I, and many who sit on the CPRF board, have been blessed with the good fortune of experiencing a successful private sector career. I personally have run, purchased and sold several companies over my lifetime. Some winners and some I'd like to forget. I can tell you without a doubt that the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well at CPRF and throughout the State of Kansas and with the passage of this bill, I envision many of my friends, business colleagues and companies currently working with the state, will be exploring ways to make this new business model work.

In reviewing this legislation I see significant potential, not only for those people with disabilities seeking employment but for business owners as well. When I owned a machining business, I had always frowned upon Federal contract preferences that would eliminate my company from competition. Unable to even get in the game, left me more than a bit frustrated.

This legislation however, offers something new, something unique, which in my view will open the eyes of the private sector, to see an opportunity for a competitive advantage, that the disabled finally have the opportunity to be a part of. It presents, not as a mandate for State contractors but as an opportunity should they choose to participate. It may sound a bit insensitive to be focusing on the business side over the advancement of persons with disabilities but the fact is, without contracts in hand, no one stays employed.

When I put on my CPRF board hat, this bill is truly a win-win situation for all parties involved. It is clear, that something different, needs to be done to advance people with disabilities into competitive employment. Inclusion of this incentive for businesses does just that.

You have heard from previous testimony and are aware of the escalating costs to the State and Federal government in supporting the growing numbers of persons with disabilities in the system. I have personally seen first-hand how productive and efficient individuals with disabilities can be. Many with disabilities can more than carry their own weight in a competitive employment environment. Now, with the new technologies available, it is not cost prohibitive to include these individuals in an existing company today, all they need is an opportunity to do so. As mentioned before, I believe this bill opens that door to the private sector.

There may be a perceived risk on both sides of the line; that of an apprehensive employer who has not had the experience of hiring someone with a significant disability and at the same time, someone with a disability hesitant to give up his or her benefits to become more independent and self-sufficient, placing their livelihood in the hands of an unfamiliar employer.

I believe it is time for both parties to move forward with courage to change the status quo and that this legislation is the vehicle to allow that to happen.

Thank you for your time and I encourage you to support this legislation.