

Written Testimony for: House Commerce and Economic Development

Wednesday, February 6, 2013

HB 2124, Employment Security Benefits

From: Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

Greater Topeka Chamber of Commerce

Manhattan Area Chamber of Commerce

Overland Park Chamber of Commerce

Salina Area Chamber of Commerce

Chairman Kleeb and Members of the House Commerce and Economic Development Committee:

The local chambers of commerce listed above would like to express our support for the majority of provisions proposed in HB 2124. We are pleased that this committee is considering language to improve current statutes regarding Employment Security Law benefits.

We support the recommended changes listed below:

- Modifying wages to include holiday pay. *Section 1, page 2, line 36 – page 3, line 9*
- An employee is not eligible to receive unemployment benefits, while the employee receives severance pay. *Section 1, page 3, line 37 – page 4, line 11*
- Clarifying gross misconduct and misconduct in the statute. *Section 2, page 7 – 11*
- Increase penalty for individuals who knowingly make false statements to obtain or increase benefits. *Section 2, page 12, lines 14 & 16*
- Lower the rate for new employers from 4.0% to 2.7%. *Section 3, page 17, lines 7 – 16*
- Change the high cost multiplier from 1.2 to 1.0. *Section 3, page 26, lines 7 – 13*
- Notification of employers by November 15 of their new contribution rates. *Section 4, page 30, lines 20 -21*
- Eliminate the Employment Security Advisory Council (ESAC). *Section 5, page 32, line 43 – page 33, line 26*

The chambers listed above do not have a position on changing the benefit weeks from 26 to 20 when the state's unemployment rate drops below 6%. *Section 1, page 4, lines 12 – 15*

Thank you Mr. Chairman and Committee for allowing these local chambers to provide input on HB 2124.