



Wichita Independent Business Association

THE VOICE OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

February 18, 2015

Written Testimony Before the House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee

HB 2299

By Tim Witsman, President

Chairman Hutton and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input and support HB 2299. The Wichita Independent Business Association (WIBA) has represented Kansas businesses for 82 years. WIBA membership ranges from the individual sole proprietor operating a home-based business to large corporations with thousands of employees. WIBA has almost 500 member businesses from Wichita and throughout the state and represents more than 250 industries.

Each year WIBA asks its members what are the most important issues to them. The top issue the last few years has been "decreasing business regulations and mandates". Recently, the US Department of Labor funded study on regulations and the cost on business. The study found that regulations cost a company with fewer than 20 employees more than 36% more per employee than companies with 500 employees or more. Tax compliance costs 3 times as much per employee for the smaller firm and environmental regulations cost 4.64 times as much.

Over the last few years, Kansas businesses have come together and have made suggestions on burdensome regulations. The two areas which prompted the most complaints were with OSHA and EPA. At the time there was little that the state could do. The creation of a State OSHA program would provide the opportunity to bring both greater fairness and consistency to the area of worker safety.

Independent businesses, from local banks to homebuilders, to home health care providers are under onslaught by government regulations with many leaving the market or selling to larger companies. Supporting the development of a statewide OSHA Would both improve the regulatory environment and send a signal to independent businesses that someone is listening, hearing their concerns, and acting to improve the business environment.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.