



Testimony before the
Senate Commerce Committee

Mike Scribner, President
Teamsters Local Union 696

March 11th 2015

OPPOSE Senate Bill 179

Mrs. Chairwoman and members of the committee:

My name is Mike Scribner and I am a Business Agent and President at Teamsters Local Union 696, we represent the majority of employees that work for Shawnee County and the Juvenile Corrections officers for the State of Kansas, along with a lot of employees in the private sector.

Teamsters Local Union 696 strongly opposes SB 179, which would set back relations and negotiated agreements, which we have worked many years to develop. I am a disabled combat Veteran, having served in the United States Army for over 7 years. After getting out of the service I choose a career that had Union benefits and protections, just like my Father and Grandfather did. I have served my career as a corrections officer for the State of Kansas and here at Shawnee County and have been part of Union contract negotiations for over 20 years. Our negotiated agreements serve to form stronger relations between employees and employers and serve to resolve conflicts that happen at the workplace.

A recent study has shown that belonging to a union improves workers happiness and quality of life¹. This in turn helps to slow down turnover and save public entities money in retention cost. This is especially important when you are talking about a Correctional setting where experience in dealing with inmates is invaluable.

Senate Bill 179 would weaken these agreements, weaken relations between employees and employers and in turn weaken the public entities that have the agreements. You would be taking away the voice of workers that work hard every day and keep our public services going. These are the people that serve as the first and last line of defense with public safety. These are the people that make sure the roads are clear so we can have a safe drive to and from work. These are the people that make sure our water is safe and clean. These are the people that ensure our most vulnerable citizens are cared for.

Freedom of speech, dignity at work, and a fair days wage for a fair days work are all key American values. This bill undermines those values and silences the voice of our public employees. I can think of no more un-American bill then SB179. I urge you to vote no.

Thank you.

Mike Scribner
President Teamsters Local 696

¹https://blogs.baylor.edu/patrick_j_flavin/files/2010/09/Union_Membership_and_Life_Satisfaction_10.27.14-nlder4.pdf