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Testimony
Senate Committee on Federal and State Affairs
HB 2154
March 16, 2105

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members

I appear before you today in support of HB 2154 concerning hiring preferences for veterans. As many of you know Manhattan is next door to Ft. Riley, Home of the Big One Red Division. For years I have been working closely with military leadership and the leadership of Kansas State University to help soldiers transitioning to civilian life.

When our soldiers leave the military they bring unique skill sets, proven work ethic, and reliability to the job market. Yet, they are facing a very competitive job market. The unemployment rate for young Veterans (age 18 to 24) was 12.4% in the summer of 2014.

What this bill seeks to accomplish is to permit private sector employers to establish a policy of veteran hiring practices. As a state, we are not mandating a hiring preference, but making it permissive.

I view this bill as a positive action for our Veterans and business community.

Thank you for time,

Tom Phillips
Representative Tom Phillips