

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE BUSINESS, COMMERCE AND LABOR COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Al Lane at 9:03 a.m. on February 12, 2002 in Room 521-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: All present

Committee staff present: Jerry Donaldson, Legislative Research
Bob Nugent, Revisor of Statutes
Rena Jeffries, Revisor of Statutes
Carol Doel, Acting Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Rich Caplan, Northeast Development and Retention Council
Philip Harness, KDHR
Ed O'Malley, Overland Park Chamber of Commerce
Bob Brewer, SPEEA

Others attending:

Representative Grant moved that the minutes of January 16, 22, 23, and 24 be approved. The motion was seconded by Rep. Levinson. Motion carried.

Briefings by Kansas Business and others on the Business/Economic Climate in Kansas

Rich Caplan, Northeast Development and Retention Council, appeared before the committee to update us on how the economy is affecting the work of his council. The number one reason for their success in Johnson County is the school district. It provides a highly educated workforce that is a big help to their economy. Anything the legislature can do to retain the fine educational system is important. One of the things they are worried about is the loss of several million dollars with the possible loss of Waddell and Reed. The company has been located there more than a decade, employs more than 550 people and pays a large amount of corporate income taxes. He brought to the committee a pamphlet, *The Northeast Johnson County Advantage*, that tells about that area of Johnson County. The pamphlet is available from his office at 4720 West 60th Street in Mission, Kansas (66205). He answered many questions about the area and the importance of further development in Johnson County, such as parkland and other development at the Sunflower Ordinance Plant.

Hearing on HB 2729 - Workers compensation; wholly dependent children.

Rep. Lane asked Bob Nugent, Revisor, to change the short title of **HB 2729** to better define the subject of the bill.

Philip Harness, Director of the Division of Workers Compensation, Kansas Department of Human Resources (KDHR), testified as a proponent for **HB 2729**. The bill is a compilation of the items which were passed by the Workers Compensation Advisory Council this year. Mr. Harness explained what the bill accomplishes. (Attachment 1)

Written testimony was passed out to the committee from Terry Humphrey, Executive Director, Kansas Trial Lawyers Association. They have no opposition to the proposed changes. (Attachment 2)

No others were present to testify for or against the bill and Chairman Lane closed the hearing.

Continued briefings by Kansas Businesses and others on the Business/economic Climate in Kansas

Ed O'Malley, Government Relations Manager, Overland Park Chamber of Commerce, brought before the committee an overview of the recent economic trend indicators in Overland Park, the efforts that they are making to help their economy, and the assistance needed by the Kansas Legislature. In Johnson County, their business expansion and relocations are down, their job growth has slightly slowed but their housing market is still strong. (Attachment 3) He concluded his testimony by answering questions from the committee.

Bob Brewer, Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA), spoke about the

CONTINUATION SHEET

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aerospace industry in Wichita and how the lay offs are affecting the employees who have been laid off. He believes that the true picture of the reductions in the workforce is not yet known. In the Wichita area they need more jobs, more money for training, COBRA assistance, and most of all they need the legislature and government/economists to take a realistic look at the problems that they are beginning to encounter in Wichita.

(Attachment 4)

Chairman Lane adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.

The next scheduled meeting will be held on February 13, 2002.