

Written Testimony

House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Development

Re: House Bill 2059 - Support
January 31, 2017
Bart Thomas, Owner of Kansas Outdoor Advertising, Manhattan, Kansas

Good afternoon Chairman Mason and members of the Committee. Thank you for allowing me to appear in support of House Bill 2059. My name is Bart Thomas, and I own Thomas Outdoor Advertising. My father started the business, and for the last 50+ years Thomas Outdoor Advertising has been working all over central Kansas installing outdoor advertising on billboards. My employees and myself work from ladders and up high on billboards, and obviously there are dangers involved.

I am aware of the *Pronko* case that states that the workers compensation system is unconstitutional. I am aware that the case is not final, but as a business owner who has several employees, I am worried about the effect on my business.

Neither my business, nor I, can afford the costs associated with lawsuits in Civil Court. My business operates on thin profit margins and volume. One Civil Court Action could put me out of business. My business does budget for workers compensation insurance for my employees. However, there is no way I can budget for, or let alone pay for a lawsuit for damages, or for legal costs associated with Civil Court.

I have also personally been injured on the job while an employee and want my employees to receive the same protections that I received. As a business owner, I respectfully request that you support House Bill 2059, so businesses in Kansas, like myself, can continue doing work in Kansas and protect our employees with workers compensation insurance.

Thank you.


Bart Thomas

