



**KANSAS**  
ASSOCIATION OF  
**COUNTIES**

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TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMERCE,  
LABOR AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
ON HB 2185

February 7, 2017

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

HB 2185 strikes the reference to K.S.A. 12-16,131, a statute that prohibits cities and counties from prescribing wages, leave or benefit requirements for employers in their community. As written, the law is an infringement on local control. Cities and counties are better suited to determine what employment requirements drive the economy in their community.

Commonly referred to as prevailing wage, these local enactments are often used to create economic opportunities in a city or county. The Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City is one example where prevailing wage has been used successfully for tourism and economic development. Prevailing wage is also used to protect the local labor market. Kansas was the first state to pass a prevailing wage requirement in 1891, and several states followed Kansas as a model at the time. Now there are 18 states that do not set prevailing wages, including Kansas.

We ask that the State remove the preemption of this economic tool, and allow cities and counties to make these decisions in their best interests.

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