

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Lana Gordon at 3:30 P.M. on March 9, 2006 in Room 526-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Renae Jefferies, Revisor of Statutes
Helen Pedigo, Revisor of Statutes
Carlene Maag, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative Edward O'Malley
Craig Kaberline, Executive Director, Kansas Area Agencies on Aging Association
Toni Wellshear, AARP Kansas
Jim Snyder, Silver Haired Legislature
Julie Govert Walter, Executive Director, North Central-Flint Hills Area Agency on Aging, Inc

Others attending:

See attached list.

HB 2993 - Workforce development, senior citizen training program

HB 2999 - Competitive grant program to develop an older Kansan workforce

Representative Ed O'Malley presented testimony on **HB 2993** and **HB 2999**.

HB 2993 requires the Department of Commerce to create a strategic plan for delivery of services to seniors and must be submitted to the Legislature by December 1, 2006.

The plan should include how resources may be used so senior citizens can have access to workforce development, the minimum amount of money that will be spend and examples of programs planned to implement or enhance workforce development for seniors. It was thought it would be beneficial if dialogue on senior workforce development could begin in January 07.

HB 2999 creates a competitive grant program to be administered by the Department on Aging, to issue grants to eligible entities for implementing and developing workforce development programs tailored to senior citizens.

Craig Kaberline, Executive Director, Kansas Area Agencies on Aging Association (K4A) gave testimony in Support of **HB 2993**. The mission of K4A is to work to improve services and supports for all older Kansans and their caregivers.

It is believed that **HB 2993** is a step in the right direction to answer questions and concerns about how older worker issues are being addressed by the Kansas Department of Commerce. (Attachment 2)

Toni Wellshear spoke as a proponent, representing AARP Kansas. **HB 2993** addresses the necessary guidelines that would ensure every senior citizen has access to workforce development and training. It is suggested that line 27 (1) be revised from age 60 or more to age 55 or more. (Attachment 3)

Jim Snyder, a member of the Silver Haired Legislature gave testimony as a proponent for **HB 2993**. As of July 1, 2004, seniors 55 and older constitute 22.4% of the population. Seniors represent 40% of the possible work population of the state of Kansas.

However, no monies are set aside for training this group of people, to re-enter the work force. **HB 2993** would bring responsibility for the administration of funds for training for Seniors. (Attachment 4)

Julie Govert Walter, Executive Director of the North Central-Flint Hills area Agency on Aging gave testimony as a proponent for **HB 2993**. This bill asks for information concerning how workforce funds are currently

used to assist job-seekers 55 and older. If passed, this legislation would promote and encourage the Department of Commerce to learn more about the work of the successful Older Kansas Employment Program (OKEP) which has served certain areas of our state extremely well. If asked for suggestions to improve this bill, it would be to specifically mention the role and performance of OKEP in the bill. (Attachment 5)

Miss Walter also gave testimony in support of **HB 2999**. Training funds are needed to help older job seekers seeking training in keyboarding, computers and using “high tech” office systems. This bill, if adequately funded, would open the doors for innovation. This bill could move many initiatives, including ways to link youth to the values of our older workers. (Attachment 6)

Representative Terrie Huntington gave a Sub Committee report on **HB 2194**. The Committee met with members of WIA boards from District, two, three, four and five. Makeup and composition of the boards was discussed. Another sub committee meeting has been scheduled for March 14.

The meeting adjourned at 4:25 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for March 14.