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Testimony

Written in Opposition of
Senate Bill 175 Before the
Senate Commerce Committee

March 18, 2019

By John Nave, Executive Vice President
Kansas AFL-CIO

Chairwoman Lynn and members of the Committee: Thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today to testify in opposition to SB 175.

SB 175 actively seeks to restrict public employees from participating in the union. If the Kansas Legislature were to pass such a bill, you will have effectively stifled the voice of firefighters, teachers, correctional officers and law enforcement. Soliciting public employees as the ones listed here serves no purpose except to weaken their collective voice to bargain for their hard earned wages, healthcare and the ability to retire with dignity. SB 175 serves no purpose because Kansas is already a Right-to-Work state. Thus, the public employee (and ANY employee) that chooses to belong to a union, does so by taking steps to voluntarily join the union. If the worker does not physically sign on to join the organization, it does not happen.

The management of how dues and or membership is tracked can be problematic for the employer that actively seeks out to discourage union membership. That is a fine line that only invites problems to the employer.

Public employees provide a valuable service to Kansans, all while simply trying to live paycheck to paycheck. This bill goes out of the way to drive a wedge between the employer and employee relationship. This is how work conditions deteriorate and our state can ill afford more of deteriorating working conditions.

Please oppose SB 175.

Thank You

