



**Testimony to House Committee on Commerce
Supporting HB 2066
January 19, 2021
The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce**

The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce (KC Chamber) urges the House Committee on Commerce to favorably pass HB 2066 which will reciprocate occupational licenses from other states, districts, or territories of the United States for our military members and spouses. The KC Chamber, representing nearly 2,000 businesses (40% of which are in Kansas), and its Board of Directors, has identified workforce development as a critical and immediate need in the greater Kansas City area. With over 6,000 residents in Fort Leavenworth which is in the Kansas City MSA and the number of individuals moving to Fort Leavenworth yearly, the Chamber believes this bill will provide more workers for the Kansas City area and provide families an easier time moving. This will also increase the pool of qualified workers to fill jobs in the greater Kansas City area and across the state.

As the economy continues to recover from the downturn in 2020 and a continued need for workers in a variety of industries, the KC Chamber believes it is imperative we find solutions to get more people trained and participating in the workforce. Accordingly, the KC Chamber instituted its Workforce Development Initiative in January 2018. The KC Chamber's Initiative is led by 60 of the top employers from greater Kansas City, educators, and workforce intermediaries from throughout the region. The committee believes that licensing reciprocity is good policy and will help alleviate workforce strains seen throughout greater Kansas City. Additionally, the KC Chamber's Military Affairs Committee, composed of top employers and veterans from these organizations, has charged the Chamber to advocate for expanded licensing reciprocity for servicemembers and their spouses.

The KC Chamber believes that making professional licenses reciprocal between states, Kansas can remove a barrier to workforce participation that businesses and workers, alike, would support. The KC Chamber encourages this committee to pass HB 2066 with a favorable recommendation.

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