



INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE

## **Institute for Justice's Written Testimony in Support of HB 2066**

January 15, 2021

Dear Chairman Tarwater and Members of the House Committee on Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony that recognizes that HB 2066 is a step in the right direction to greater opportunities for Kansans and reducing unnecessary regulations.

My name is Meagan Forbes, and I am an attorney at the Institute for Justice. The Institute for Justice is a nonprofit public interest law firm. We litigate and work nationwide to protect civil liberties, including economic liberty.

The Institute for Justice supports HB 2066 for three reasons. First, it is an important step toward lessening licensing barriers in Kansas. Occupational licensing laws differ from state to state and create substantial barriers to worker mobility. HB 2066 helps break down those barriers by allowing qualified workers with licenses, certifications or experience from other states to work in Kansas. Workers do not lose their skills and experience when they cross state lines, but licensing laws often treat them as if they do. Kansas should recognize out-of-state workers' credentials and experience. State boards should not require qualified workers to spend time and money satisfying unnecessary licensing requirements or to be subjected to statutory comparisons of qualifications between states.

Secondly, HB 2066 helps relieve friction in labor markets. We live in a national economy, but occupations are primarily regulated at the state level. Governmental policy should encourage people to follow opportunity and not create unnecessary obstacles to earning a living. This policy is especially important as the country recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic. Workers need the flexibility to pursue jobs wherever they may be. States can help reduce the friction that occupational licensing causes and encourage productivity by recognizing the licenses and experience of out-of-state workers. Several states, including Arizona, Missouri, Iowa, Idaho, Utah, Montana and Pennsylvania, have enacted universal recognition laws, and these laws are attracting workers to their states. For example, since Arizona's law was enacted in 2019, more than 2,400 people have relied on the recognition law to obtain licenses to work in the state.

Lastly, by providing a path for licensed, out-of-state physicians to practice telemedicine in Kansas, HB 2066 increases access to health care. During the pandemic, increasing access to telemedicine eases burdens on hospitals and increases safety. But beyond the pandemic, this reform will allow individuals that are immuno-compromised, disabled and/or living in rural areas to have access to much-needed medical care.

I encourage you to support this bill. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Meagan Forbes  
Legislative Counsel  
Institute for Justice