

To: Chairman Proehl and Members of the House Transportation Committee
From: Jake Miller, Executive Director for the Working Kansas Alliance
Re: Opponent Testimony for SB 546, Written Only
Date: March 29, 2022



Chairman Proehl and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jake Miller, and I am the executive director of the Working Kansas Alliance (WKA). WKA is an organization made up of labor organizations and non-labor organizations who stand together in support of workers' rights. Working Kansans and their families deserve protections for the jobs they perform. Especially, employees who through the COVID-19 pandemic made sure that essential packages were still delivered to our families. As well as keeping a supply chain that was in high demand still moving. WKA stands in strong opposition to SB 546 due to its attempt to destroy and cut jobs of package delivery personnel and truck drivers.

Under SB 546, the intention is to automate the trucking industry. In essence that seems like someone trying to move with the times. However, that is simply not the case. **Instead, this bill would kill thousands of jobs of hard-working Kansans.** Truck drivers make a good living and ones who have spent years in the industry have missed holidays and important time with their families. If SB 546 is passed, the Kansas Legislature will be sending the message to them of "Thank you for your service but truck drivers really aren't that important."

We strongly urge you to oppose SB 546 and its attempt to undercut truck drivers and to kill jobs. Proponents will state that this bill will not hurt jobs, but how can that be true. If this bill is passed without a permanent human fail safe option, the bill will end jobs for the majority of Kansas truckers. At the same time, it will put many Kansas drivers at risk.

Indeed.com states that the average salary of a truck driver in Kansas is \$73,593.00. Further a statistic from 2010 shows that Kansas has 69,670 truck drivers, which is most likely higher in 2022¹. Further in 2010, it was reported that wages to Kansas truck drivers was in excess of \$3 Billion. Passage of SB 546 will put a heavy strain on the Kansas economy and kill thousands of jobs in one of Kansas's most cherished occupations.

Should the committee have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you,

Jake Miller
Executive Director
Working Kansas Alliance

- SMART Transportation Division*
- Teamsters 696*
- International Association of Fire Fighters*
- Kansas National Education Association*
- Kansas Coalition of Public Retirees*
- Kansas Organization of State Employees*
- Kansas AFL-CIO*
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 304*
- Kansas AFT*
- Teamsters Joint Council 56*
- Wichita Hutchinson Labor Federation*
- Tri-County Labor Council of Eastern Kansas*
- Kansas Chiropractic Association*
- Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 441*
- Laborers 1290 & Laborers 1290PE*
- Service Employees International Union Local 513*
- Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen - IBT*
- Brotherhood of Maintenance of Ways Employees Division - IBT*
- Greater Kansas City Building & Construction Trades Council*
- Boilermakers Local 83*
- Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers & Grain Millers Local 218*
- Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division*
- International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers 304*
- Carpenters Regional Council St. Louis - Kansas City*
- Salina Area Workers Coalition*

¹ I have attached the 2010 information to this testimony.

Kansas Fast Facts



TRUCKING DRIVES THE ECONOMY

- **Employment:** In 2010, the trucking industry in Kansas provided 69,670 jobs, or one out of 15 in the state. Total trucking industry wages paid in Kansas in 2010 exceeded \$3.0 billion, with an average annual trucking industry salary of \$42,539. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in May 2010 that truck drivers, heavy, tractor-trailer and light, delivery drivers, held 26,310 jobs with a mean annual salary of \$33,410.
- **Small Business Emphasis:** In 2011, there were over 7,520 trucking companies located in Kansas, most of them small, locally owned businesses. These companies are served by a wide range of supporting businesses both large and small.
- **Transportation of Essential Products:** Trucks transported 84 percent of total manufactured tonnage in the state in 2010 or 262,896 tons per day.* Over 49 percent of Kansas communities depend exclusively on trucks to move their goods.

TRUCKING PAYS THE FREIGHT

- **As an Industry:** In 2009, the trucking industry in Kansas paid approximately \$435 million in federal and state roadway taxes and fees. The industry paid 45 percent of all taxes and fees owed by Kansas motorists, despite trucks representing only 12 percent of vehicle miles traveled in the state.
- **Individual Companies:** In 2011, a typical five-axle tractor-semitrailer combination paid \$6,090 in state highway user fees and taxes in addition to \$7,771 in federal user fees and taxes. These taxes were over and above the typical taxes paid by businesses in Kansas.
- **Roadway Use:** In 2008, Kansas had 140,611 miles of public roads over which all motorists traveled 30 billion miles. Trucking's use of the public roads was 3.6 billion miles.

SAFETY MATTERS

- **Continually Improving:** At the national level, the large truck fatal crash rate for 2009 was 1.04 fatal crashes per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT). This rate is at its lowest point since the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) began keeping these records in 1975. Since that time, it has dropped 77 percent.
- **Sharing the Road:** The trucking industry is committed to sharing the road safely with all vehicles. The Share the Road program sends a team of professional truck drivers to communities around the country to teach car drivers about truck blind spots, stopping distances and how to merge safely around large trucks, all designed to reduce the number of car-truck accidents.
- **Safety First:** Kansas Motor Carriers Association members put safety first through improved driver training, investment in advanced safety technologies and active participation in industry safety initiatives at the local, state and national levels.

TRUCKS DELIVER A CLEANER TOMORROW

- **Fuel Consumption:** The trucking industry continues to improve energy and environmental efficiency even while increasing the number of miles driven. In 2009, combination trucks consumed over 57 billion fewer gallons of fuel than passenger vehicles in the U.S. and accounted for just 17 percent of the total highway transportation fuel consumed.
- **Emissions:** Through advancements in engine technology and fuel refinements, new diesel truck engines produce 98 percent fewer particulate matter (PM) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions than a similar engine manufactured prior to 1990. Sulfur emissions from diesel engines have also been reduced by 97 percent since 1999.
- **Partnerships:** Through the U.S. EPA's SmartWay Transport Partnership, the trucking industry is working with government and businesses to quantify greenhouse gas emissions and take steps to reduce them.



* Manufactured tonnage data provided by IHS Global Insight.
Updated December 2011 with most recent data available.