



**Testimony to Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation
Supporting SB263
March 22, 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 SB263 to expand the Employer Child Care Tax Credit program to increase child care capacity in the State of Kansas. This bill will help remove a critical barrier individuals face when deciding to enter or re-enter into the workforce or stay home to care for children. By encouraging more businesses to provide childcare or assist employees with childcare access, more folks can enter or stay in the workforce.

The KC Chamber, representing nearly 2,000 businesses and 300,000 employees, and its Board of Directors, has identified workforce development and early childhood education and childcare as a critical and immediate need for the Kansas City area and the State of Kansas. According to the Mid America Regional Council (MARC), there are nearly 69,000 open jobs in the greater Kansas City area with qualified workers. Expanding opportunities for Kansans to gain employment by removing barriers is a win-win for the business community and the state's workforce. Increasing the number of available workers in the state will also make Kansas an attractive state to relocate or grow a business. We often hear from employers and employees, alike, that finding quality access to childcare is a significant impediment to entering, re-entering or staying in the workforce.

The coronavirus pandemic demonstrated this critical need and showed its disproportionate effects on women in the workforce. Unfortunately, access to child care is often a hinderance to women participating in the workforce. With this in mind and as the economy continues to rebound from the 2020 coronavirus-induced downturn, the KC Chamber believes it is imperative we find solutions to get more people participating in the workforce to perform these vacant jobs. Workforce development is economic development and, in order for the Kansas City region and the State of Kansas to flourish, we must invest in a robust pipeline of talent.

The KC Chamber supports the expansion of the Employer Child Care Tax Credit program in order to expand childcare access for hardworking Kansans. The Chamber believes that bills like this, Kansas can create a more robust and educated pipeline of workers to make the state an attractive place to grow or relocate a business. The KC Chamber encourages this committee to pass SB263 with a favorable recommendation.

**John Jenks
Director, Public Policy
The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce
913.515.1958**

Senate Assessment and Taxation
Date _____

Attachment # _____