

UNITED WE .

Testimony re: Right to Earn a Living Act (SB 10)
Senate Commerce Committee
January 27, 2021

Chairman Olson, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of legislation that is key to unlocking the economic potential of women in Kansas. My name is Wendy Doyle, and I am the President and CEO of United WE. Our organization seeks to advance all women's economic and civic leadership.

Senate Bill 10, the Right to Earn a Living Act, breaks down barriers that stand in the way of many women entering and staying in the workforce. These barriers impede the state's growth and hold women back who want to contribute not only to the economy, but to their families' livelihood. The bill states that, "*the freedom to earn an honest living traditionally has provided the surest means for economic mobility,*" and United WE wholeheartedly agrees.

United WE's research report, The Status of Women in Kansas, focused on economic development indicators and developed a baseline to monitor Kansas' progress to advance women's economic and civic leadership. We believe the Right to Earn a Living Act includes strategies, like requiring state agencies to conduct a comprehensive review of all occupational rules and regulations and occupational licenses within their jurisdictions, that will bolster the economic development indicators that will be studied in the upcoming update to the Status of Women in Kansas research report.

Furthermore, we encourage regulatory agencies to consider a consumer's perspective beyond general public health, safety, and welfare objectives. To that end, we recommend a certification system that reflects the nuances of these licensed professions and reduces barriers for entering a profession and staying in the workforce.

At the Committee's discretion, we suggest the following language be included in the bill to address this issue:

- *The consumer has challenges accessing credentialing information or possesses significantly less information on how to report abuses such that the practitioner puts the consumer in a disadvantageous position relative to the practitioner to judge the quality of the practitioner's services, the regulation should implement a system of certification.*
- *Whether practice of the profession or occupation proposed for regulation or expansion of regulation requires such a specialized skill that the public is not qualified to select a competent practitioner without assurances that minimum qualifications have been met.*

Thank your consideration of this legislation. We look forward to working with you this session to further stimulate the economy of Kansas and to ensure that women across this state have the tools they need to determine their own economic future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy D. Doyle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy D. Doyle
President and CEO
United WE