



February 19, 2024

Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Commerce Committee,

On behalf of the Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce and our 1,400 members, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.B. 2745, AN ACT concerning occupational licensing; relating to occupational licensing, certification and registration fees; providing that military spouses of active military servicemembers shall be exempted from all such fees; amending K.S.A. 2023 Supp. 48-3406 and repealing the existing section.

This legislation would exempt the spouses of active-duty military members from all application, licensing, registration, certification, or permit fees associated with an occupational license. Adoption of this policy would save military families money and, in some cases, allow military spouses to enter the Kansas workforce more quickly.

The Chamber introduced this legislation at the request of the Chamber's Military Affairs Council. This council provides civilian support to McConnell AFB and engages in every component of the military and veteran's spectrum, with special attention paid to the well-being of veterans as a substantial component of the regional workforce. The council works diligently to provide support to the base, its members, and their spouses in an ongoing effort to show the United States Department of Defense that Wichita is a great home for military installations and operations.

While the state of Kansas has taken several steps to assist in removing red tape in an effort to make entering the workforce by military spouses easier, there is more that could and should be done. Eliminating licensure and application fees would save military families precious resources and, in many cases, accelerate their entrance into the Kansas workforce. While this bill is aimed at providing benefits and support for our military families, it also should be noted that it would benefit Kansas employers in their search for talented and experienced workers.

H.B. 2745 is a commonsense bill and is good public policy. With that in mind, we urge the Committee to report H.B. 2745 favorable for passage.

Thank you, and I am happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Very truly yours,

Jason P. Watkins