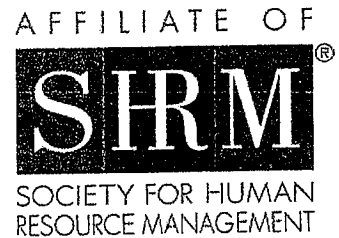




**KANSAS STATE COUNCIL
SOCIETY FOR HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**



Testimony in Favor of HB 2531

February 2, 2012

Phillip M. Hayes, SPHR

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Chairman Brown and honorable committee members,

I am Phil Hayes, Director-Elect with the Kansas Society for Human Resource Management (KS SHRM). Thank you for the opportunity to appear in favor of HB 2531, which proposes to create a workers' compensation and employment security boards nominating committee.

For those unfamiliar with KS SHRM, it is an organization comprised of human resource (HR) professionals in Kansas. Our members serve public and private sectors as well as large and small businesses. The focus of the HR professional is to facilitate between the employer and employee so that a safe and productive work environment is reached. On a daily basis these members are on the front line when it comes to workers compensation and unemployment insurance issues.

Today, KS SHRM stands in support of HB 2531 because it proposes to address what has become a contentious and closed process with little ability for the business community to participate. Currently, the process allows only the Kansas Chamber and the Kansas AFL-CIO to recommend candidates for the workers compensation process. While there are some members of KS SHRM who belong to the Kansas Chamber, the majority of them do not. As a result, our organization has little ability to influence their recommendations. Currently, the membership of KS SHRM has a significant interest in the workers compensation judicial selection process as many of our members are responsible for coordinating the claims for both the employer and employee. KS SHRM has a vantage point unlike any other interest group in Kansas. As such, we strongly believe the broadening of the judicial recommendation process and including more groups involved in the system will produce a better, more qualified candidate.

In addition, KS SHRM supports the consolidation of appointments for the Unemployment Compensation system. It is KS SHRM's belief that by consolidating the two boards to one will streamline the appointment process and identify a larger pool of candidates from which the selections can be made. A consistent concern shared by KS SHRM members regarding the Unemployment System is the inconsistency and lack of practical work experience of unemployment insurance referees. The inexperience leads to unjust decisions for both employees and employers. KS SHRM would argue if we can have better information and experienced review panelists; the system will be fairer for both the employer and employee.

Last session, KS SHRM was part of the collective effort to pass sweeping Workers Compensation reform in Kansas. After witnessing the success this collective effort, I am confident the groups named in HB 2531 can together greatly improve the selection processes in Kansas for both the workers compensation system and the unemployment compensation system.

And finally, as this bill progresses, line 16 on page 1 should read as follows to accurately reflect the legal name of the KS SHRM organization:

(5) the Kansas State Council of the Society for Human Resource Management (KS SHRM);

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of HB 2531. At this time, I will stand for questions.

House Commerce & Economic
Development Committee

Date: 02/02/2012

Attachment #: 2