



EQUALITY ♦ LAW ♦ JUSTICE

Disability Rights Center of Kansas
214 SW 6th Avenue, Suite 100 ♦ Topeka, KS 66603
Phone: 785.273.9661 ♦ Toll Free: 1.877.776.1541
Toll Free TDD: 1.877.335.3725 ♦ Fax: 785-273-9414
www.drckansas.org info@drckansas.org

Proponent for HB 2253
House Commerce, Labor & Economic Development Committee
February 9, 2023

Chairman Tarwater and members of the Committee:

My name is Mike Burgess. I am the Director of Policy & Outreach at the Disability Rights Center of Kansas (DRC). DRC is a public interest legal advocacy organization that is part of a national network of federally mandated organizations empowered to advocate for Kansans with disabilities. DRC is the officially designated protection and advocacy system in Kansas. DRC is a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, organizationally independent of state government and whose sole interest is the protection of the legal rights of Kansans with disabilities.

I am writing today to share our support for HB 2253 or Kathy's Bill.

Kansas has an existing preference for veterans, which is a very good thing. This bill would extend similar a similar preference to individuals with disabilities who choose to disclose and provide documentation of their disability.

This bill is the same as a version that passed out of this committee previously. It would put into statute a policy that is similar to E.O. 15-02, but would apply to additional agencies. Both the existing Executive Order and this bill if implemented along with the key findings and recommendations from the report the Department of Administration commissioned in 2018 have the potential to turn the State of Kansas into a model employer for Kansans with disabilities.

Having worked with Kathy Lobb for a number of years, this would be a fitting recognition for her significant work to increase employment opportunities for Kansans with disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for HB2253. I would be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.