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Date: March 18, 2024

To: Chairmen Adam Smith
House Taxation Committee

From: John Nave, Executive vice-president AFL-CIO
Re: Proponent Testimony for HB 2773

Chairmen Smith and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to speak in **SUPPORT for HB 2773** and provide compelling testimony in its favor. As an ardent advocate for youth development and workforce readiness in our community, I see this legislation as a pivotal opportunity to uplift our youth and strengthen our local economy.

HB 2773 seeks to grant a sales tax exemption for specific purchases by the Boys' and Girls' Club of Topeka (BGCT), particularly for the construction of a new workforce readiness, career, and leadership center tailored to middle and high school students. This isn't merely about building infrastructure; it's about investing in the future of our workforce and ensuring the well-being of Topeka and Shawnee County working families.

By throwing our support behind the BGCT project, we're not just ensuring safe care for our youth; we're expanding care capacity, providing families with crucial resources that empower their children for success. This investment is pivotal for nurturing a skilled, resilient workforce that will drive economic growth and prosperity throughout our state.

The envisioned workforce readiness center under HB 2773 embodies the Kansas AFL-CIO mission commitment to equipping young individuals with the essential skills and experiences needed to thrive in today's competitive job market. Through robust skill development programs, teens will have the opportunity to hone critical job skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, time management, and technical proficiency. These skills are not just vital for securing employment but also for fostering long-term career success and personal growth.

Furthermore, the BGCT project will serve as a springboard for career exploration among our youth. Many teens lack exposure to diverse career paths and opportunities. By offering workshops, job shadowing programs, internships, and mentorship opportunities, the workforce development center will enable teens to explore their interests, uncover their strengths, and make informed decisions about their future career paths.



In closing, HB 2773 represents a transformative investment in our community's future. By championing this legislation, we're investing in the success of our youth and the prosperity of our entire community. I implore all honorable members to carefully consider the immense benefits of this legislation and to unequivocally support its passage.

For the betterment of working families, and Shawnee County, I urge you to Vote Yes on HB 2773. Thank You