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Collectively, our member organizations represent over 500,000 working Kansans.

SMART Transportation Division

Kansas Organization of State Employees

Laborers Local 1290

International Association of Fire Fighters

Kansas National Education Association

Kansas Coalition of Public Retirees

Kansas AFL-CIO

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 304

Kansas AFT

UFCW Local Union 2

Teamsters Joint Council 56

Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employes Division - IBT

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen – IBT

Wichita Hutchinson Labor Federation

Tri-County Labor Council of Eastern Kansas

Kansas Chiropractic Association

Pipefitters Local 533

Service Employees International Union Local 513

Greater Kansas City Building & Trades Council

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 124

Boilermakers Local 83

Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers & Grain Millers Local 218

Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council

Salina Area Workers Coalition

Working Kansas Alliance
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Kansas City, KS 66106
www.workingkansans.org

To: Senate Commerce Committee
From: Jake Miller, Executive Director of the Working Kansas Alliance
Date: March 29, 2023
RE: SB 38 Proponent Testimony – Written & Oral Testimony

Chairwoman Erickson and Members of the Committee,

I write to you today to urge your strong support in passing SB 38. SB 38 would provide workers' compensation protection for a small number of workers' who suffer from Permanent Total Disability ("PTD"). Workers who suffer from PTD struggle to return to work from their work-related injury, as their injury has caused a Doctor to deem them permanently and totally disabled. Typically, they were injured at no fault of their own and to the benefit of their employer.

Currently, workers who have a PTD injury are capped at receiving \$155,000.00 in total damages, even though they never will be able to return to work. How is that fair? This means the current statute places a value on a person's life and injury.

The change addressed in SB 38 is much needed. As I mentioned earlier, these workers are typically injured at no fault of their own. So why would we place a limit or a value on them?

Opponents will say they are against this bill due to insurance rates increasing. However, workers who suffer from PTD, in some instances, have literally broken their back and decreased their enjoyment of life for that employer. It is sad that opponents believe these workers deserve to have a value placed on those individuals lives and health. Instead, we deserve to treat these workers with dignity and respect. While also thanking them for the work they did to help the employers business.

Passing SB 38 is a much-needed change to workers' compensation in Kansas which would allow individuals to receive the help they deserve. We strongly ask for your support of SB 38, which would bring much needed reform to the workers' compensation system in Kansas.

Should there be any questions from the committee, please do not hesitate to reach out to jdm235@gmail.com.

Most Respectfully,

Jake Miller
Executive Director
Working Kansas Alliance

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