

HOUSE BILL 2077 TESTIMONY
Committee on Veterans, Military and Homeland Security
By Charles M. Yunker, Adjutant
The American Legion Department of Kansas
January 31, 2013

Thank you for granting me the opportunity this morning to testify on behalf of House Bill 2077. My name is Charles Yunker and I am the Adjutant for the Kansas American Legion.

The American Legion applauds this Committee for the introduction of HB 2077 and today's Hearing. Our organization believes its passage will provide today's youngest veterans a much better opportunity to find meaningful employment upon their honorable discharge from military service.

The latest unemployment rate among veterans between the ages of 18 and 35 in Kansas is still in the double digits and I'm certain everyone on this Committee believes we can do better. HB 2077 is just one tool the Legislature can implement to assist our state's youngest veterans when they return to civilian life.

Likewise those active duty personnel stationed in Kansas are more likely to move their families to Kansas if their spouse is able to find employment. It's simple, the more active duty families we can attract to Kansas, the more our state benefits economically.

Further, HB 2077 will increase the number of skilled, licensed workers in Kansas which has the potential to attract more business and industry to our state.

We do have one suggested amendment to the bill. On page one, line 22 item (c) provides for each licensing body to adopt rules and regulation for implementation. We ask you to consider adding a statement which indicates those rules and regulations cannot exceed today's standards except in cases where those standards are being modified across the board for veteran and non-veteran alike. You also may wish to include language which reminds all state

Veteran/Military/Homeland Security Comm

Date: JAN 31, 2013

Attachment #: 3

agencies that veterans' preference is to be considered at all times when hiring new state employees.

In closing I would like to state once again The American Legion applauds this Committee's efforts to support veterans and their families. HB 2077 is not only a veteran friendly bill; it is also an active duty military family friendly bill which has huge potential on many fronts.