

House Commerce Committee
Testimony in Favor of HB 2353
March 14, 2017

My name is Andy Manion and I am a proponent of House Bill 2353. I work at The Kansas Elks Training Center for the Handicapped Inc. doing business as KETCH. I serve in the capacity of product sales/marketing executive and have done so for over five years.

KETCH is a non-profit organization which provides many supports for Kansans with severe disabilities. Some of the supports KETCH provides for Kansans with severe disabilities include residential and community programs. An additional support category KETCH provides is our work/employment program which is the program I am involved with day-to-day.

The KETCH work/employment program has been in place for many decades and currently provides employment for over 80 Kansans with disabilities. The disabilities of a majority of the persons served in our work/employment program are to a degree severe enough that employment out in the community is not realistic now or in the future. The main product manufactured by KETCH currently is HVAC air filters which are made by Kansans with disabilities at the KETCH headquarters in Wichita, KS. KETCH manufactures over 200,000 HVAC air filters annually making KETCH one of the largest manufactures of HVAC air filters in the State of Kansas. The high demand for our filter products keeps our persons served busy almost every day and their attitudes are overwhelmingly positive and they express they are grateful for the work. On the rare occasion KETCH is low on manufacturing work, persons served come to me directly expressing they are ready for more work as soon as it becomes available and I take personal responsibility to be able to find that work.

Most of the entities that purchase our HVAC filter products are located in the State of Kansas. Many of those Kansas based entities are unified school districts and state agencies of all sizes purchasing KETCH products via the State Use Law/State Use Purchasing Program Catalog. The feedback I receive from these buyers participating in the State Use Law/State Use Purchasing Program Catalog is positive. Buyers are glad to be able to buy a product competitive or better than what is available to them on the open market while helping provide employment opportunities for Kansans with disabilities at KETCH.

I urge you to support the negotiated provisions of HB 2353 as the changes proposed will strengthen the current law and assure it is serving those the law intends to help.

Written by Andy Manion, KETCH 316-383-8772 or amanion@ketch.org