
JOB CORPS

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**House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development
Hearing on HB 2455 Jan 23, 2020
Written and Oral Testimony in Support of HB 2455
on behalf Flint Hills Job Corps
by Aaron Estabrook, Business and Community Liaison**

The Honorable Sean Tarwater and Members of the Committee,

It is our collective belief that this HB 2455 will be helpful in ending the cycle of generational poverty while also saving tax dollars and incentivizing employers to utilize young adults who have received federal taxpayer funded education/training through the Federal Department of Labor Job Corps program in Kansas. This is one of the most successful workforce development and education programs in United States history.

Job Corps is a program born from the 1964 LBJ era legislation that become known as the "War on Poverty". Other programs like Head Start, VISTA, and Community Action programs all came on the heels of the creation of Job Corps. The War on Poverty was founded on the most conservative principle: "Put the power in the local community, not in Washington; give people at the grassroots the ability to stand tall on their own two feet". This bill incentivizes private companies that are seeking government contracts to give Job Corps qualified students in Kansas the opportunity to utilize their training and sharpen their skill set.

HB 2455 relates to how State Contracts are awarded or more broadly how scoring "bids" or proposals on RFPs' for state work/construction is done.

When a Request for Proposal is sent out for something by the State of Kansas (utilizing tax dollars) the state would be better served in our opinion to place this new incentive for the private contractor proposals to award preference to those applications that are from a ***Job Corps Aligned Business***. This would be a new term and the language is defined in the bill.

Currently Flint Hills Job Corps serves 217 students that are being trained **in cement masonry, carpentry, construction craft labor, building construction technology, welding, plumbing, nursing, and dental care, and heavy truck driving**. All students are ages 16-24 years old and are under the federal poverty income threshold. Over 90% of students are Kansas residents but we are one of three Job Corps in the Country that have a single parent program that attracts young parents and their children from out-of-state.

Job Corps is currently authorized under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) of 2014. Policies and requirements for operation of the Job Corps program are contained in the Job Corps' Policy and Requirements Handbook, (PRH). The Department of Labor, Job Corps, Policy and Requirements Handbook defines the MOU between Private Employer and Job Corps for "Work Based Learning" in PRH Chapter 3 Exhibit 3-4.