



**TESTIMONY OF
Sarah LaFrenz, President
KANSAS ORGANIZATION OF STATE EMPLOYEES (KOSE)
February 12, 2020**

Chairman Lynn and Members of the Senate Commerce Committee,

As President of the Kansas Organization of State Employees (KOSE), I am providing written testimony in opposition of SB 361, which would impose government overreach upon the judgments of individual Kansans.

We oppose SB 361 because it is an unnecessary and unfair bill that targets the hard-working civil servants of our state.

As the Legislature considers SB 361, KOSE respectfully requests you each recall and consider that Kansas has been a right to work state since an amendment to the Kansas Constitution in 1958. Because of this existing amendment, public employees already make a conscious and active choice to join their union and pay union dues. No one is coerced or forced to join. The true purpose of this bill is to weaken the collective voice of the membership of our Union.

The Kansas Department of Corrections just announced a potential layoff at Lansing Correctional Facility, which could potentially include security staff. The Kansas Department of Transportation continues to struggle to hire heavy equipment operators and keep our roads safely repaired and maintained. And our Kansas mental health facilities, specifically in Larned, continue to be understaffed and consistently mandate workers for overtime – on top of their already scheduled 8-hour shift - daily. On February 28, the Larned State Hospital reported a 70% vacancy rate for Licensed Practical Nurses at that facility alone. These are the real issues that require legislation.

In closing, I would urge you to remember we have actual continuing pressing issues to deal with – like staffing, pay, and safety for state employees – which require the attention of elected officials and representatives. We call upon you to stop the distractions and divisions – and to place real focus on the issues at hand for the Kansans we all represent.

Thank you for your consideration of this written testimony.

The Kansas Organization of State Employees (KOSE) is a union for executive branch state employees, and the largest union of state employees in Kansas. All non-supervisory, non-confidential employees in the executive branch of Kansas state government (exclusive of higher education) are eligible to join KOSE. KOSE is local 300 - dually affiliated with both AFT and AFSCME. info@koseunion.org