



**Testimony to Senate Committee on Commerce
Supporting SB 366
February 17, 2020
The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce**

The Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce (KC Chamber) urges the Senate Committee on Commerce to favorably pass SB 366 which will streamline reciprocity for occupational licenses from other states, districts or territories of the United States for our military members and spouses and individuals planning on moving to the State of Kansas. This will make the transition of a move easier for members of our armed services and their spouses, and others looking to relocate to Kansas, while also increasing the pool of qualified workers to fill jobs in the greater Kansas City area and across the state. The KC Chamber, representing nearly 2,000 businesses (40% of which are in Kansas), and its Board of Directors, have identified workforce development as a critical and immediate need to fill the over 73,000 open jobs in the greater Kansas City area with qualified workers. With over 6,000 residents in Fort Leavenworth in the Kansas City MSA and the continued relocation of individuals to Fort Leavenworth yearly, the Chamber believes this bill will allow for an increased pool of workers for the Kansas City area and provide families more security as they move.

As the economy continues to hold at record unemployment numbers, the KC Chamber believes it is imperative we find solutions to get more people trained and participating in the workforce. Accordingly, the KC Chamber instituted its Workforce Development Initiative in January 2018. The KC Chamber's Initiative is led by 60 of the top employers from greater Kansas City, educators and workforce intermediaries from throughout the region. The committee believes that licensing reciprocity is good policy and will help alleviate workforce strains seen throughout greater Kansas City. Additionally, the KC Chamber's Military Affairs Committee, composed of top employers and veterans from these organizations, has charged the Chamber to advocate for expanded licensing reciprocity for service members and their spouses.

The KC Chamber believes that making professional licenses reciprocal between states will allow Kansas to remove a needless barrier to workforce preparedness that businesses and workers, alike, support. Streamlining licensing reciprocity will also allow individuals to enter the workforce quicker and begin contributing to the economy of Kansas. The KC Chamber encourages this committee to pass SB 366 with a favorable recommendation.

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