



**Senate Commerce Committee
Written Testimony in
Support of HB 2702
Submitted by Tim McKee, CEO**

Chair Lynn and honorable committee members,

The Olathe Chamber of Commerce is the largest chamber in Johnson County and the second largest chamber in the Kansas City area. Comprised of 1,300 members and growing, it was the first chamber in the state to receive 5-Star Accreditation from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce - a designation obtained by less than 1 percent of the nation's chambers. Its mission is to be the voice of business that advances the economic well-being and quality of life in Olathe.

As the Olathe Chamber's CEO, I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 2702, which proposes to decouple the Kansas Industrial Training (KIT) and Kansas Industrial Retraining (KIR) workforce training programs from the High-Performance Incentive Program (HPIP). These tools are vital to our economic development efforts to recruit new employers to the state as well as supporting existing employers' efforts to invest in and expand their businesses.

KIT is a program used to assist companies with job creation in Kansas by investing in necessary training for specific knowledge and skills needed for employees to enter their new jobs successfully. KIR is a job retention program that helps with retraining employees whose skills set are obsolete or inadequate for the new and innovative workplace technology and procedures. HPIP is a tool that provides tax incentives to employers who invest in capital improvements for facilities and technologies upgrades as well as provide for above average wages.

Historically, these three incentives have been linked together and used in conjunction with one another. While together they have been very effective tools, HB 2702 proposes to decouple the incentives and allow them to be used independent of each other. By allowing these programs to be used independently, we believe they will be even more effective and provide the much-needed flexibility for today's competitive economic development arena.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these written comments in favor of HB 2702. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 913.764.1050.

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