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House Commerce, Labor & Economic Development Committee
February 22, 2021
Testimony in Support of HB 2351
By Natalie S. Bright

Chairman Tarwater and Honorable Committee Members,

I am Natalie Bright appearing on behalf of the Kansas Society for Human Resource Management (KS SHRM) in favor of HB 2351. For those unfamiliar with KS SHRM, it is a professional organization comprised of 2,300+ HR professionals in Kansas. KS SHRM serves the needs of HR professionals and advances the interests of the HR profession throughout the state. Our members are responsible for developing and implementing workplace policies and practices that comply with federal, state, and local laws and providing guidance to managers at all levels about fair and effective people management practices. Our members serve in the public and private sectors representing both employer and employee issues.

KS SHRM understands and appreciates the importance and value of work-based learning. It connects classroom learning to the real world. It gives students opportunities to practice skills in real-world settings and observe professionals of all kinds in action. It allows students to develop soft skills. However, employers are often reluctant to participate in work-based learning programs because of the uncertainty of who is responsible for providing liability insurance coverage on the student.

As such, HB 2351 proposes liability protection for businesses that participate in high school work-based learning programs and clarifies USD's are responsible for carrying coverage for the students. It treats high school work-based learning programs like other school sponsored events and authorizes schools to purchase insurance coverage for students participating in the activity.

The members of KS SHRM respectfully ask the committee to support HB 2351. By doing so you will be supporting career exploration and establish the foundation for more hands-on experience which will allow for a more informed and better trained future pipeline of Kansas employees. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of HB 2351.