

To: Senate Commerce Committee
From: Jake Miller, Executive Director of the Working Kansas Alliance
Date: March 8, 2022
RE: SB 361 Proponent Testimony - Written & Oral Testimony



Chairwoman Erickson and Members of the Committee,

I write to you today to urge your strong support in passing SB 361. SB 361 would provide workers' compensation protection for a small number of workers' who suffer from Permanent Total Disability ("PTD"). Workers who suffer from PTD struggle to return to work from their work-related injury. Typically, they were injured at no fault of their own and to the benefit of their employer.

Currently, workers who have a PTD injury are capped at receiving \$155,000.00 in total damages, even though they may never be able to return to work. How is that fair? This means the current statute places a value on a person's life and injury.

The change addressed in SB 361 is much needed. As I mentioned earlier, these workers are typically injured at no fault of their own. So why would we place a limit or a value on them?

Opponents will say they are against this bill due to insurance rates increasing. However, workers who suffer from PTD, in some instances, have literally broken their back and decreased their enjoyment of life for that employer. It is sad that opponents believe these workers deserve to have a value place on those individuals lives and health. Instead, we deserve to treat these workers with dignity and respect. While also thanking them for the work they did to help the employers business.

Passing SB 361 is a much-needed change to workers' compensation in Kansas which would allow individuals to receive the help they deserve. We strongly ask for your support of SB 361, which would bring much needed reform to the workers' compensation system in Kansas.

Should there be any questions from the committee, please do not hesitate to reach out to jdm235@gmail.com.

Most respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jake Miller", is written over a faint, light blue circular watermark or background.

Jake Miller
Executive Director
Working Kansas Alliance

*KNEA has also signed
on to this testimony.

SMART Transportation Division

Teamsters 696

International Association of Fire Fighters

Kansas National Education Association

Kansas Coalition of Public Retirees

Kansas Organization of State Employees

Kansas AFL-CIO

*International Brotherhood of Electrical
Workers Local 304*

Kansas AFT

Teamsters Joint Council 56

Wichita Hutchinson Labor Federation

Tri-County Labor Council of Eastern Kansas

Kansas Chiropractic Association

Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 441

Laborers 1290 & Laborers 1290PE

*Service Employees International Union Local
513*

*Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and
Trainmen - IBT*

*Brotherhood of Maintenance of Ways
Employees Division - IBT*

*Greater Kansas City Building & Construction
Trades Council*

Boilermakers Local 83

*Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers &
Grain Millers Local 218*

*Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way
Employees Division*

*International Brotherhood of Electrical
Workers 304*

*Carpenters Regional Council St. Louis -
Kansas City*

Salina Area Workers Coalition

