



Chairman Petersen and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jonathan Lueth, Deputy State Director with Americans for Prosperity Kansas. We believe in and support the rule of law, and believe that supporting legislation such as this is a great step in creating a pathway for individuals with a suspended driver's license to break the proverbial "revolving door" of penalties, fines, fees, and crimes by helping encourage people to stay on the right path. We are here today to ask for the committee's support of SB 2, but also considering some amended tightening of the language to ensure a clear and meaningful process is in place to strengthen this bill and its intended outcomes.

We want to make sure the thousands of people who are affected by this have a job when they need to pay their fines rather than lose their ability to pay. We have seen that suspending someone's license for non-public safety or traffic reasons does not make our roads safer and actually puts more unlicensed and uninsured drivers on the road. In recent years numerous states across the country such as Texas, Virginia, Mississippi, and Montana have all made significant reforms to their current laws to break this cycle of suspension, accumulation of additional fines and fees, and feeling the need to commit further criminal action to pay for their outstanding fines and fees.

SB 2 with improvements which we have been working with coalition partners to develop, could help to eliminate a barrier that creates a two tiered society, a barrier navigable by our most well off and insurmountable by those who struggle to most to make ends meet. People should make restitution and pay their debts, but we believe driver's license revocation or unattainable fees should not be the first step to trying to make that happen. Our incentives are currently misplaced and we ask that you support policies such as this bill to work for a better solution. A New Jersey study in 2007 found 42% of people who had their license suspended lost their jobs, half of those individuals were unable to find new employment and of those who did find new employment, in nearly every case they earned less than they did before.

Providing a more clear pathway to right continue gainful employment will not only help break a recidivistic cycle of crime, but further strengthen and protect Kansas communities as we see individuals continuing to contribute to Kansas's economy, have an anchor point to their community and continue to have both literal and proverbial buy in to the institutions and community around them. We ask that you support SB 2 to best achieve the intention of our legal process and ensure Kansans with safer communities, and a meaningful pathway to recover from past transgressions.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Lueth

Deputy State Director

Americans for Prosperity-Kansas

