

STATE OF KANSAS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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LAURA WILLIAMS  
30TH DISTRICT

February 6, 2026

Chair Sutton and members of the committee,

HB 2602 creates a voluntary framework that allows independent workers to access portable benefits through third party providers - without changing their employment status. Simply put, portable benefits are traditional workplace benefits that the individual owns but can be contributed to by companies and organizations that contract their services. Portable benefits follow the worker, not the job.

Under this bill, independent workers can choose to opt into benefits like health coverage, disability or income replacement insurance, life insurance, or retirement benefits. Hiring parties may choose to contribute if both sides agree, but nothing in this bill requires participation from either party. The plan stays with the individual regardless of where or how he or she works. Importantly, this bill does not create any new state mandates. It does not establish a new benefits plan or anything that requires state oversight. And most importantly, it does not trigger the reclassification of independent workers as W-2 employees.

Independent and flexible work options are an important and growing part of the Kansas economy. The most recent census data shows us that there are over 220,000 independent workers in Kansas today—approximately half of which are women. I recognize the importance of this option because I chose independent work over a traditional W-2 job while raising my young children. The option to work independently allowed me the flexibility I needed while raising my family. Many people choose this kind of work because they value flexibility and control over their schedules, and many small businesses rely on independent workers to operate and grow. Our laws should protect independent contracting status and reflect how Kansans actually work today.

Right now, Kansas companies face legal uncertainty when it comes to offering benefits to independent workers. HB 2602 removes that uncertainty by making clear that voluntary benefit contributions do not affect worker classification. That clarity protects workers, businesses, and the state.

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Importantly, this bill is not a mandate. It does not require employers to offer benefits or workers to accept them. It simply allows people to choose what works best for them.

Portable benefits are a widely supported, bipartisan, practical solution that other states are already moving toward. HB 2602 ensures Kansas keeps pace while protecting worker independence and economic opportunity.

I respectfully ask for your support of HB 2602, and I'm happy to answer any questions.

**Laura Williams**

Representative, House District 30