



Testimony re: SB 229
Senate Commerce Committee
February 11th, 2025

Mr. Chairman Alley, Vice Chair Owens, Ranking Member Ware and Members of the Committee:

I'm pleased to join you today to discuss occupational licensing reform and why it matters so much to the women of Kansas. You may recall from previous sessions the mission of United WE is to advance all women's economic and civic leadership. Our quantitative and qualitative research tell us loud and clear that Kansas women cannot reach their economic potential when unnecessary regulations stand in their way.

SB 229 represents an opportunity to join 14 other states that have a review process for occupational licensing requirements. By promoting transparency and informed decision-making, we aim to facilitate individuals' pursuit of their chosen professions without unnecessary government intervention.

Our [Status of Women in Kansas](#) research report told us several hard truths:

- Women in Kansas earn a median salary of \$38,116, compared to \$49,140 for men—an \$11,000 gap.
- Women dominate in caring professions, which pay significantly less than technical and managerial roles.
- Kansas has the largest male-female self-employment gap in the country, with 11.1% of men self-employed versus only 7.1% of women.

Further, women are 6.5% more likely than men to hold certifications or licenses. For this reason, United WE prioritizes removing barriers for women governed by occupational licensing boards. Research by the McKinsey Global Institute projects that fully engaging women in the Kansas workforce could grow our state economy by 10-15% by 2025.

SB 229 constitutes the right approach for Kansans. It creates a process for sunseting outdated occupational licensing requirements, preventing duplicative boards, and ensuring new requirements are efficient and necessary.

Consider this example: Kansas salon owners offering spray tanning services are not required to hold a state license, as spray tanning poses no public health risk. This regulatory balance allows entrepreneurs to expand their services while protecting public welfare. Similarly, pet groomers in Kansas are not currently required to hold a state license. This enables professionals in this growing industry to focus on providing essential services to pet owners without being burdened by unnecessary regulation. These examples showcase how the right balance between entrepreneurial opportunity and public welfare can drive economic growth and job creation across our state.

Our research is clear: occupational licensing reform is essential for unlocking women's full economic potential and fostering entrepreneurship. We stand ready to support policymakers in advancing common sense solutions that move our state forward.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if we can assist your deliberations. Thank you for the opportunity to share United WE's perspective on this important issue for the state's workforce.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Wendy D. Doyle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy D. Doyle
President & CEO
United WE