

Date: March 6, 2025

To: Senate Government Efficiency Committee
Senator Renee Erickson, Chair

From: Carol Moreland, MSN, RN
Executive Administrator
Kansas State Board of Nursing

Subject: SB 256

Position: **Neutral (Written)**

The Kansas State Board of Nursing (KSBN) provides this neutral written testimony for SB 256 that concerns state employees; enacting the back to work act. The mission of the Kansas State Board of Nursing (KSBN) is to protect the public by providing competent nurses and mental health technicians.

KSBN appreciates and supports increasing the efficiency of state agencies so we can better serve our customers. However, SB 256 may not accomplish that and KSBN has the following concerns regarding this bill:

- The bill affects only full-time employees. Requiring only full-time employees to return to the office will divide the employees and it could be perceived that part-time employees are favored, since they would not have the same requirement to work in the office. It is unclear why this would only affect one group of employees.
- Requiring full-time employees to return to the office to work will lead to some experienced, competent employees leaving state employment. It will be harder to fill the positions if remote work is not an option for some employees. If qualified candidates do not apply for full-time, it may force the agency to have two part-time positions instead of the full-time. This will cost the agency more costs in benefits and equipment, etc. and may not increase the efficiency.
- KSBN has appr. 70% of employees working a hybrid staffing model. This does include both full-time and part-time employees. KSBN's performance metrics continue to be stable and good. Bringing full-time employees back in the office doesn't necessarily mean better performance metrics, when their performance stays strong with hybrid work. Our employees in positions that allow hybrid work have the option of a hybrid schedule once their probationary period is ended (6-month period after hire) and their performance is satisfactory.
- Employee morale will decrease if they are required to return to their office, which can lead to more vacancies. Often it is difficult to fill state employee positions due to the pay difference from similar positions in the private sector. Being able to offer remote work has been a selling point to hiring a qualified candidate. We will lose that selling point if SB 256 passes.

The hybrid work model has allowed KSBN to expand its hiring pool beyond the greater Topeka area, significantly improving recruitment efforts for difficult to hire positions like Registered Nurse Investigators and attorneys. By offering remote and flexible work options, KSBN had been able to attract highly qualified candidates from outside the Topeka area who may not have otherwise considered commuting or relocating. The broader reach has enhanced the agency's ability to fill key positions with skilled professionals, strengthening operations and ensuring continued service excellence.

The passage of SB 256 will likely have some negative consequences on the state employee workforce. Remote work is working well for some agencies, so the passage of this bill probably will not increase efficiency in these agencies. KSBN encourages the committee to consider the possible negative consequences of the passage of this bill.