



TOPEKA

SENATE CHAMBER

Dinah Sykes

Senate Minority Leader

Chase Blasi

Senate Majority Leader

Madam Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary,

This testimony is submitted jointly by Majority Leader Blasi and Minority Leader Sykes in support of SB 427. As Chair and Vice Chair of the Senate Committee on Confirmation Oversight, we work in a bipartisan manner to provide balance and accountability between the appointing authorities of Kansas and the Legislature. Our committee reviews dozens of nominees each year, and we meet individually with each nominee to ensure their experience, judgment, and priorities align with the responsibilities entrusted to them on behalf of Kansans. These appointments often bring together individuals with varied backgrounds and perspectives, helping create balanced and effective boards and commissions. Because many of these positions carry significant public responsibility, nominees are required to undergo a background check and provide a certificate of tax clearance.

In 2024, the Legislature passed broad background check reform legislation intended as a technical-cleanup bill. However, as a result of that legislation, the statute regarding non-gubernatorial nominees became unclear. KLRD is also providing informational testimony on this bill and will provide additional detail regarding the consequences of the 2024 legislation and the resulting inconsistencies in current law.

SB 427 expands the long-standing intent of the confirmation process. It preserves the confidentiality of sensitive and privileged information while ensuring that the chair and vice chair of the Confirmation Oversight Committee can fulfill their oversight responsibilities. The bill only allows the chair and vice chair to access the background checks if the nominating authority wishes to proceed with the nomination after their review of the background check. Ensuring bipartisan leadership within the Legislature can appropriately review information necessary to evaluate all nominees subject to Senate confirmation.

We believe SB 427 is a narrowly tailored, commonsense correction that strengthens legislative oversight, maintains confidentiality, and supports a transparent and accountable confirmation process. For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee's support of SB 427.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Chau Blasi". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large loop at the end.

Senate Majority Leader Blasi

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Donald H. Sykes". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large loop at the end.

Senate Minority Leader Sykes