

MINUTES OF THE SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Karin Brownlee at 8:30 a.m. on March 19, 2003 in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present: April Holman, Legislative Research
Mitch Rice, Revisor of Statutes
Jodie Anspaugh, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative David Huff
Wayne Miller
Jim DeHoff, AFL-CIO
Carol Ball, Let's Help, Inc.
A.J. Kotich, Kansas Department of Human Resources
Dr. Ernie Pogge, AARP

Others attending: See attached list.

Chairperson Brownlee opened the hearing on HB 2332. Representative David Huff testified as a proponent to the bill. He is concerned that Kansas currently penalizes older workers who are on social security when they apply for unemployment. (Attachment 1)

Wayne Miller, resident of Overland Park, testified in support of the bill. (Attachment 2) Current Kansas Employment Security Law is unfair and may even be discrimination against senior citizens. More and more older Americans are seeking work past retirement age.

Jim DeHoff, AFL-CIO, testified in support of the bill. (Attachment 3) The Employment Security Council supports this important change in what has been an unfair offset against people who have had benefit taxes paid to them and had to endure a reduction in unemployment benefits. Individuals receiving Social Security benefits have 50% of that award deducted from their unemployment benefit.

Carol Ball, Let's Help, Inc., testified in support of the bill. (Attachment 4) She sees more and more older Kansans seeking help. The bill would support older Kansans who are having financial difficulties.

A.J. Kotich, Kansas Department of Human Resources, testified in support of the bill. This bill would discontinue the present practice of reducing unemployment benefit payments by 50% of any social security pension benefits received. (Attachment 5)

Dr. Ernie Pogge, AARP, testified in support of the bill. (Attachment 6) Kansas reduces unemployment benefits for workers collecting Social Security, even though they have become unemployed through no fault of their own and intend to return to work when that becomes possible.

Secretary Jim Garner told the committee that there is currently \$360 million in the unemployment trust fund. He does not expect a turnaround in the economy anytime soon.

Chairperson Brownlee closed the hearing on HB 2332. Senator Barone made a motion to move the bill out favorably for passage. Senator Buntgen seconded. The motion carried.

Chairperson Brownlee opened the hearing on HB 2289. Steve Weatherford offered testimony in support of the bill. (Attachment 7) This bill seeks to amend the KDFA Enabling Act to authorize the Authority to issue bonds for certain projects both within and outside the State of Kansas. This is sought in part by the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth. The Sisters have requested that KDFA seek the multi-state authority

CONTINUATION SHEET

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so that they may use KDFAs as their “home issuer” for future finance projects.

Chairperson Brownlee announced that she will hold open the hearing on HB 2289.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2003 at 8:30 a.m. in Room 123-S.