



**Overland
Park
Chamber™**

To: Senator Erickson and Members of the Senate Commerce Committee

**From: Kevin Walker, Senior Vice President of Public Policy
Overland Park Chamber of Commerce**

Date: 16 February 2022

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 2219. The bill establishes the Targeted Employment Act and offers tax credits with the intent of incentivizing employers to hire individuals with development disabilities.

Our conversations with employer reveal a consistent theme – the inability to find employees to fill vacancies. Those with developmental disabilities are often eager to work at meaningful jobs within the community and earn competitive wages. However, lack of opportunities and low societal expectations often create unnecessary barriers. We believe this legislation incentivizing hiring those with developmental disabilities connects members of our communities who are drastically underemployed with readily available jobs.

The bill provides the KS Department of Aging and Disability Services a role in evaluating program data to ensure the program properly protects the rights of those being employed as well as ensuring the program dollars are providing meaningful return on investment for taxpayers.

We believe efforts to connect pools of candidates with available jobs is a win-win proposition. If we can do that, improve on the quality of life for thousands of Kansans and reduce reliance on costly programs then we magnify the positive outcomes.

We believe the objective of this bill is important and worth your full consideration and we encourage the Senate Commerce Committee to act favorably on HB 2219.