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**TESTIMONY**  
**Written In Support of**  
**House Bill 2026 Before the**  
**Commerce, Labor & Economic Development Committee**

**February 12, 2019**

By Andy Sanchez, Executive Secretary-Treasurer  
Kansas AFL-CIO

Thank you Chairman Tarwater and members of the committee. HB 2026 is aimed at trade certification requirements that most other skilled trades already operate under. The State Fire Marshall's Office would be in charge of administration and already have oversight of the industry. In general, we are supporting the bill for the good of public safety and the industry.

Fire public safety has never been more important than it is right now because as we become more urbanized and commercialized, structures become larger and hold a higher concentration of people underneath one roof. Thus, more people and property are at risk. Fire disasters do kill, and it is important to point out, heat and smoke is often more dangerous than flames.

The trade of "Sprinkler Fitter" is a viable and necessary skilled occupation in the construction industry. It is a four to five-year apprenticeship program utilizing a combination of on-the-job training and a certain number of hours of classroom instruction by a trained certified instructor. Apprenticeship training hours are verified through the U.S. Department of Labor as installers advance from apprentice to journeyman.

With so much potential for disasters in our communities and campuses that we have little control over, fires are an example where we can make an impact to help keep the public safe. Emergency preparedness is simply taking methodical steps to avoid a catastrophe. By insuring qualified sprinkler fitter installers, we take care of the question: Did we take the necessary precautions to avoid harm to people and prevent property damage? With HB 2026 I believe we are on the right track, and thus, we can offer our wholehearted support for HB 2026.

Thank You.

