



Testimony in Support of House Bill 2097  
House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee  
January 25, 2021

Chairman Tarwater and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the nearly 3,000 business members of the METL Coalition, the Chambers of Commerce of Manhattan, Emporia, Topeka, and Lawrence would like to express their full support of HB 2097, which proposes to decouple the Kansas Industrial Training (KIT) and Kansas Industrial Retraining (KIR) workforce training programs from the High-Performance Incentive Program (HPIP).

KIT is used to assist companies in creating jobs by supporting training for employees who need specialized skill sets, while KIR is a job retention tool designed to help existing employees pivot as technology advances and business processes evolve to remain competitive. HPIP is a popular tool that provides tax incentives to employers who invest in capital improvements or technological upgrades while providing above-average wages. These are all great programs that make Kansas more competitive, but current requirements force businesses that seek to utilize the HPIP program to also use KIT or KIR, which is not ideal.

Most businesses that utilize the HPIP program do not necessarily need or want to participate in the KIT or KIR programs. Forcing them to do so causes unnecessary time and effort on the part of the business and is not an efficient use of our Economic Development Incentives Fund. By decoupling KIT and KIR from HPIP, we will not only make the process more efficient for businesses that utilize the HPIP program, we will also have more funds for businesses that want and need to utilize the KIT and KIR programs.

Please support House Bill 2097.

Respectfully,

METL - The Chambers of Commerce of Manhattan, Emporia, Topeka, and Lawrence