



Testimony before the
Senate Commerce Committee

Matthew Hall, Political Director Teamsters Joint Council 56
Teamsters Local Union 696

February 14th 2021

Oppose Senate Bill 177

Chairman Olson and Members of the Committee,

Teamsters Joint Council 56 represents over 10,000 workers throughout Kansas, we write to you today to testify in opposition to SB 177 as it is currently written.

While Teamsters currently opposes SB 177, there are aspects of the bill we support. We support SB 177 efforts to resolve fraud our unemployment system has experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the changes to unemployment benefits within SB 177 will not alleviate unemployment fraud but instead harm Kansans.

SB 177 changes the rate triggers (Percentages that determine how long a claimant may receive benefits) and the maximum duration for how long a claimant can receive unemployment benefits. Teamsters does not understand how changing the amount of time a claimant can receive benefits will alleviate our system current issues. Teamsters believes no changes should be made to the benefits unemployed Kansans may receive.

If these issues are fixed and the bill moves forward then additionally, Teamsters Joint Council 56 asks that the committee consider an amendment to include private sector school bus drivers in the unemployment system at this time. This is a bill we have asked for several years and feel that the challenges of the pandemic have highlighted the needs of this group more than ever before. School bus drivers are some of the only private sector workers in the state that don't qualify for unemployment and we ask that this issue be addressed at this time. There have previously been hearings in both the House commerce committee and Senate commerce committee on this issue.

Thank you for your time today. Should the Committee have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at matthall696@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Matthew Hall