

To: Senator Rob Olson and Members of the Committee

From: Jake Miller, Working Kansas Alliance

Re: Testimony in Opposition of SB 161

Date: February 24, 2021

Chairman Olson and members of the committee,

My name is Jake Miller, and I am the executive director of the Working Kansas Alliance (WKA). WKA is an organization made up of labor organizations and non-labor organizations who stand together in support of workers' rights. Working Kansans and their families deserve protections for the jobs they perform. Especially, employees who through the COVID-19 pandemic made sure that essential packages were still delivered to our families. WKA stands in opposition to SB 161 due to its attempt to destroy and cut jobs of package delivery personnel.

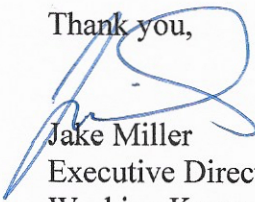
SB 161 is a job killer. Proponents will testify that jobs will not be lost through this bill. Though that may be true now, that won't be true in the future as robots take over delivering these packages. These robots will replace hardworking Kansans. Over the last year we have seen huge increases in unemployed Kansans as a result of the pandemic. If this bill is passed the Legislature will add more Kansans to unemployment list.

Furthermore, SB 161 is not in the best interests of the community. Under this bill there is no requirement for testing and deployment and therefore, companies can currently deploy these robots without testing. In all cases, there needs to be successful testing of this technology before deployment. Right now, there is no proof that these robots are safe to place in Kansas Neighborhoods.

I live in a very dense neighborhood in Kansas City, KS. One that businesses like Amazon would love to deploy these robots in. However, my street, along with all other streets in my neighborhood, only has a sidewalk on one side of the street. I have attached photos to my testimony to show this. What happens when one of these are deployed in my neighborhood? My neighborhood has a school one block away from my house. Many kids ride their bike to and from school on the sidewalks that are available. There simply is not enough information surrounding these robots as to what happens in the situations I have presented.

For the above reasons WKA must oppose SB 161. I thank the committee for allowing us to submit written testimony today. Should questions arise feel free to contact me at jdm235@gmail.com.

Thank you,


Jake Miller
Executive Director
Working Kansas Alliance



SMART Transportation Division

Teamsters 696

International Association of Fire Fighters

Kansas National Education Association

Kansas Coalition of Public Retirees

Kansas Organization of State Employees

Kansas AFL-CIO

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 304

Kansas AFT

Teamsters Joint Council 56

Wichita Hutchinson Labor Federation

Tri-County Labor Council of Eastern Kansas

Kansas Chiropractic Association

Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 441

Laborers 1290 & Laborers 1290PE

Service Employees International Union Local 513

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen - IBT

Brotherhood of Maintenance of Ways Employees Division - IBT

Greater Kansas City Building & Construction Trades Council

Boilermakers Local 83

Bakery, Confectionary, Tobacco Workers & Grain Millers Local 218

Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees Division

Carpenters Regional Council St. Louis - Kansas City

Salina Area Workers Coalition



