

Dennis Arnold
11515 Kenny Ln
Wichita, Kansas 67212
(316) 722-1729
arnold82@sbcglobal.net

To: Chairman Rhoades and Members of the House Appropriation Committee

From: Dennis Arnold, BTCO Lead Employee

Chairman Rhoades and Members of the House Appropriation Committee, my name is Dennis Arnold. I want to thank you for your willingness to allow me to provide testimony in support of House Bill 2442.

I have lived in Kansas for all but one year of my life. I worked primarily in the construction industry. One day at work I slipped off a platform and fell 15 feet. My poorly executed landing resulted in a spinal cord injury. I utilized the State of Kansas's Vocational Rehabilitation program and acquired an Associates degree in Electronics. I worked for two years for ScriptPro in Mission Kansas. It was a great job but not a great match. I went back to school and received a Bachelors degree in Mechanical Engineering and finished my degree in May of 2009, just as the Aerospace companies were downsizing. I applied for over 500 jobs over a large portion of the country. After 6 months of searching, I received a job from Business Technology Careers Opportunities (BTCO) in Wichita and have worked for them for over two years. BTCO has provided me an opportunity to receive a competitive wage for the type of work done, great health insurance and an alternative to receiving government aid. BTCO has also allowed me to develop some leadership and training skills which I will be utilizing at a job I will be starting in a few weeks at Cessna Aircraft.

Kansas's Vocational Rehabilitation system worked for me preparing me to return to the workforce, though if there hadn't been companies willing to hire me, I would be sitting at home receiving services instead of working and helping fund services for others. House Bill 2442 is one way to encourage other companies to hire the disabled or to purchase from companies that do hire the disabled. I believe this bill will increase the number of success stories you will be hearing from across the state.

Thank you again for your consideration.