

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMERCE AND LABOR COMMITTEE.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Donald Dahl at 9:00 a.m. on January 28, 2003 in Room 521-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Representative Donald Betts, Excused  
Representative Dale Swenson, Excused

Committee staff present: Jerry Ann Donaldson, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Renaë Jefferies, Revisor of Statutes  
June Evans, Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Martha Gabehart, Executive Director, Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns

Others attending: See attached sheet

The Chairman opened the meeting and asked if there were any bill introductions.

Representative Bob Bethell requested introduction of a bill that would establish a state occupational safety plan. This legislation is the same as last year's **HB 2868 - State occupational safety plan**. Hearings were not held on **HB 2868** and it was referred to a summer interim committee. The interim committee recommended the bill be re-introduced and hearings held this session.

Representative Johnson moved and Representative Humerickhouse seconded to accept the request as a committee bill. The motion carried.

Martha Gabehart, Executive Director, Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns (KCDC), briefed the committee on the disability concerns and employment issues that relate to people with disabilities. KCDC is an advisory body charged with advising the governor, legislature and state agencies about issues of concern to all Kansans with disabilities; provide information, referral and education programs; and assist other agencies and disability organizations with initiatives that support people with disabilities staying in their own communities. KCDC does not provide job placement or case management services.

Five years ago the commission decided their main goal was for Kansas to be the number one state in the nation for employment of people with disabilities. According to the 2000 census Kansas was tied with Wyoming for ninth place. The tactical planned activities relate to improving employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Two grants have been received totaling more than \$800,000 to work with workforce centers in Kansas and to improve services for people with disabilities.

The most important issue affecting employment for people with disabilities is the cut to the Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS) budget. The Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) program provides personal care services to disabled people in their own homes. Personal care attendants come into the homes

CONTINUATION SHEET

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and get the individuals ready for work. This service is not available in nursing homes.

The Working Healthy program budget has not received any cuts and will be expanded to provide personal care attendant services. Mary Ellen Wright, Director, could give a briefing to the committee on the Working Healthy Program if the committee would want.

A group of concerned organizations recently formed the Kansas Big Tent Coalition. Their plan is to develop and present a position that increases the SRS budget. (See Attachments 1 - 5).

Chairman Dahl asked Ms. Gabehart if she was working with groups to have people come and rally at the Capitol?

Ms. Gabehart replied the Commission worked as support to those coming to the Capitol.

Representative Ruff stated that last year the disabled group stormed the Capitol Rotunda. She asked if this group was expected to be larger this year?

It was agreed the group would be larger this year.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m. and the next meeting will be January 31.