

UNITED WE .

Testimony re: Kansas Senate Bill 348
House Health Committee

March 3rd, 2022

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

My name is Wendy Doyle, and I am the President and CEO of United WE. The mission of United WE is to advance all women's economic and civic leadership.

To that end, our organization embraces opportunities that foster the ability of Kansas women to participate fully in the workforce. We see Senate Bill 348 as a step forward in that regard.

Just last month, we unveiled the update to the 2015 Status of Women in Kansas research report. Our findings show progress, but also areas of need. For example, the gender wage gap in Kansas is larger than the wage gap compared to the U.S as a whole. Women in Kansas earn 77.6% of men's earnings, compared to 81.5% of men's earnings at the national scale. Additionally, only 16.8% of businesses are owned solely by women. We also know that, according to the McKinsey Global Institute, the Kansas economy can grow by 10-15% by 2025 if women are fully participating in the workforce.

Senate Bill 348 addresses both of those statistics because it adds a tool in the toolbox of women business owners, and women in this particular sector, to maximize their economic potential. Our previous research on occupational licensing tells us that employed women are more likely to hold a certification or license than employed men (28.1 percent and 23.2 percent, respectively). We also know that working women face a disproportionate economic impact from the Coronavirus pandemic when compared with their male counterparts.

I'm pleased, on behalf of United WE, to support Senate Bill 348 because it brings forth a solution to one issue we've uncovered in our brand new research report. We have had the good fortune in previous sessions of working with this body on occupational licensing reform and look forward to being your partner this year as well.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wendy D. Doyle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wendy D. Doyle
President and CEO
United WE