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**JEFF PITTMAN**

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Chairman Dillinger and members of the Senate Ways & Means committee--

Work training is a great option for the state of Kansas. We have been in a capacitated situation in our prisons. We can impact this near crisis situation with programs such as diversion, alternate punishments and corrective assistance around things like drugs and mental health. We can also reduce recidivism by preparing our offenders for release, putting them in a better position for success versus dropping them into the same environment and circumstances where they were when they committed their crimes.

I represent the area around Lansing Correctional facility. I have talked with offenders and their family members. I recognize the challenge of a successful re-entry. I believe inmates who have the opportunity to engage in prison work programs while incarcerated have an easier time getting work once they are released and when they have work, they are less likely to turn to a life of crime. They are better at handling responsibility, they gain functional life skills and specific technical skills.

As long as we ensure that this is not a path to private prisons in Kansas, this appears to be a great program benefiting my district. I commend the private partners for stepping up to help develop work-skills and also assisting successful rehabilitation of those who will be re-entering our general population. I rise in support of this type of innovation in Kansas.

Senator Jeff Pittman

Senate District #5 LVCO/WYCO