



**KS SHRM recognizes and understands how vital member participation is to advancing the views of the profession at the Kansas State House. KS SHRM has retained the services of Bright & Carpenter Consulting, LLC to give HR a voice in Topeka. Two lobbyists, Natalie Bright & Marlee Carpenter, represent KS SHRM in Topeka, advocating for issues identified by KS SHRM to elected officials and state agency officials. As a leading advocate for the HR community, it is important for KS SHRM members to keep their elected officials informed on how public policy issues at the state can affect employees, employers, and the HR profession as a whole. Over the past 10 years, KS SHRM has worked to bring employers increased efficiencies and less regulation, lower taxes & unemployment insurance rates, and a significant reduction in workers compensation premiums.**

**“KS SHRM provides real world expertise needed to create business friendly growth oriented public policy for Kansas. They are vital to the business lobby.”**  
--Senator Julia Lynn,  
Chair of Senate Commerce Committee

**“In past sessions the legislature has made significant changes to the worker compensation and unemployment insurance laws that have led to significant savings to Kansas businesses. KS SHRM has played a significant role in helping to not only craft these changes but in lobbying for passage. KS SHRM is a valuable and trusted resource for many lawmakers and I look forward to working with them on future legislation that will contribute to businesses thriving in our state.”** --Representative Mark Hutton, Chair House Commerce and Labor

## KS SHRM Lobbying is Making an Impact

**Reforms in Employment Security Law (Unemployment Insurance) projected to save Kansas employers \$57.8 to \$84.6 Million in 2016**

In 2014, unemployment insurance tax rates were *reduced by 15%* for positive balance employers saving nearly *\$41 million* in payments for employers who have been paying an unfair share of the UI assessments since the 2008 fund bankruptcy. The financing methodology was reformed to better align each employers' experience rating, which provides predictability, stability and equitable participation in the system. With improved economic climate, fewer payments have been made out of the UI Trust Fund, causing an overage in collections and employers are seeing a reduction in their tax rates. In addition, changes to the number of benefit weeks tied to the statewide unemployment rate is also bringing savings. These changes, coupled with stronger fraud enforcement provisions, less dollars are being spent on UI benefits saving Kansas employers *\$57.8 to \$84.6 million* in 2016 alone.

**Reforms in Workers Compensation system saved Kansas employers \$49.4 million in 2015**

This effort was led by KS SHRM and their lobbyists working with other interested parties to reform the workers compensation system. Kansas employers were rewarded for these reforms by seeing a *10.4% reduction* in work comp premiums equating to *\$49.4 million savings* for Kansas employers in 2015.

**Restored the original intent of the Kansas Age Discrimination Act**

KS SHRM led the efforts to restore the original intent of the Kansas Age Discrimination Act, which protects workers over the age of 40 from discrimination by employers. Kansas law originally provided a cause of action to workers as young as 18 years old. KS SHRM worked to make Kansas laws consistent with federal requirements for all states of protection for individuals over the age of 40.

**Streamline business practices, cut expenses, & decrease regulations**

Kansas businesses are always searching for ways to streamline their business practices and cut expenses. One such way in which businesses are cutting costs is reducing their use of paper and moving to paperless systems, including direct deposit of paychecks or a payroll debit card. Legislation passed and signed into law, which was initiated by KS SHRM, now allows Kansas employers to give employees a payroll debit card. It was a win-win for employers and employees. Employees now have faster access to their wages electronically and can avoid expensive check cashing fees. Employers can reduce paper costs and give employees another option for receiving their wages. Additionally, KS SHRM continues to fight off legislation that would increase regulation on how Kansas employers classify their employees. KS SHRM fought off tougher laws on the misclassification of employees.

**More dollars to go toward retaining our companies in Kansas**

In 2014, efforts which KS SHRM was a part of, led to the extension of the authorization of the Promoting Employment Across Kansas (PEAK) program, including the retention program that is used to keep existing companies in Kansas. This program uses \$6 million annually to attract companies and bring jobs to Kansas. \$1.2 million of that can be used to retain companies in Kansas. The program was originally set to expire in 2014. Reauthorization of PEAK provides both existing and new Kansas employers incentive to invest and grow the Kansas economy.

## Topeka HR Voice Reduces Cost of Doing Business in Kansas

# Building KS SHRM Advocates

*"As a leading advocate for the HR community, it is important for KS SHRM members to keep their elected officials informed on how public policy issues at the state can affect employees, employers, and the HR profession as a whole. Therefore, KS SHRM provides its members with a number of opportunities for such action through our KS SHRM legislative initiatives."* -Phil Hayes, The Arnold Group

- **Direct legislative feedback from KS SHRM members through surveys and active committee process**
- **Member driven Legislative Position Statements regarding:**
  - \* **Alternative Dispute Resolution**
  - \* **Background Investigation**
  - \* **Fair Employment Practices**
  - \* **Health Care**
  - \* **Immigration**
  - \* **Unemployment Benefits**
  - \* **Workers' Compensation**
  - \* **Workplace Flexibility**
  - \* **Workplace Health, Safety and Security**
- **Weekly "HR" specific Bill Tracker & Statehouse Updates**
- **Monthly Legislative Update Calls**
- **Relationship building opportunities with state policy-makers**
- **KS HR on the Hill Day activities held during Annual KS SHRM Employment Law & Employee Benefit's Conference in February**
- **Grassroots advocacy for members including:**
  - \* **Write their elected officials**
  - \* **Assist members drafting testimony (written and/or in-person)**
  - \* **Coordinate other legislative activities**
- **Kansas Legislative Recap article in Annual Statewide KS HR Works magazine**
- **KS SHRM Chapter's Elections Committee initiatives**
  - \* **Comprehensive Election Tracking**
  - \* **Candidate Forums**
  - \* **Candidate Surveys**
- **KS Legislative Update & Advocacy Training programs**
  - \* **KS SHRM Conferences**
  - \* **KS SHRM Chapter Luncheons**

## Other areas KS SHRM's HR Voice is Reducing Costs for Kansas Businesses

### Regulations from religious freedom

In 2014, KS SHRM opposed and fought off harmful religious liberties legislation. The legislation, which was to protect employees and their religious views, would have also been harmful to employers and businesses by putting into jeopardy Kansas' right-to-work laws. Employers would have had less protection and less authority to hire or fire at will, requiring a change in hiring practices. This legislation continues to pose a threat to Kansas employers as it will remain a topic of legislation for future sessions.

### Final paycheck allowed to be withheld

KS SHRM-initiated legislation eased requirements for an employer to withhold an employee's final paycheck in the event that the employer's property needs to be recovered, repayment of a loan or advance the employer made to the employee, recovery of payroll overpayment, or replacement cost of the employer's merchandise, uniforms or equipment. These changes give greater protection to the employer and allow them to recoup funds without having to take the employee to court.

### Held off unfriendly immigration policy

Legislation to mandate employers to use E-Verify, which costs \$63 on average for an employer to use for one worker, and aggressive Arizona-style immigration reform policy have been threats in the Statehouse, and KS SHRM has been successful in holding off harmful immigration reform. State immigration reforms could have costly effects to our Kansas employers and SHRM members by making the HR job more difficult. In fact, across the country it has cost each state who has implemented such legislation over 10,000 jobs and had billions of dollars in negative economic impact.

### Independent Contractor Garnishment

Working with policymakers to assure child support collection procedures via wage garnishment of independent contractors does not interrupt employers' payroll systems or overburden Kansas businesses.



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