



A New Day... A Better Way... For State Employees

Testimony Presented to the Kansas State Employee Pay Plan Oversight Commission

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Good morning. My name is Stan Fry and I have worked with KDOT for more than twenty years and am presently classified as a Senior Equipment Operator. Currently, my pay is about \$16 per hour and has remained at this level for the last four years, until the recent increase went into effect. Because of the work we do, Kansas has repeatedly been ranked in the top-10 of the nation's best roads. During the winter, we plow the snow along the interstate, and work long hours in the 100 degree heat during the summer. In my so-called workplace, cars sometimes speed more than 60 miles an hour through the zone. We constantly face dangers that many in the state aren't aware of, or would expose themselves to given the chance. As a KDOT employee, I literally work in the trenches across Kansas.

My wife, Kim is a deputy clerk at the County Treasurers Office in Clay Center. Making only \$10 per hour, we as a family have to tighten our wallets to make end meet every month. Additionally, I work another job on a farm doing everything from hauling and bailing hay, to putting up fences, to repairing machines – anything to earn a couple more dollars a month.

The reason we work so hard is so that our two children are able to go to college. Working for \$16 an hour doesn't pay the usual \$10,000 tuition, or even the money needed to set up a dorm room. My son, who will graduate in December from Kansas State University, received a few scholarships, but my wife and I still pay on a \$40,000 loan. My daughter just enrolled this year at Kansas State and we have already spent more than \$10,000 on tuition and books alone, even though she has multiple scholarships. I have dedicated the last 20 years of my life to the State of Kansas, and yet my family suffers in order to send my kids to state universities. My children deserve to have the opportunities that college can provide and I will work until I die to ensure they get those chances.

I have stayed with KDOT because I love my job, and I want to be able to send my children to college. We don't eat out, and more often than not, we have leftovers. We don't go to movies, or buy new clothes. We aren't always able to make ends meet, but it is more important for my children to get a good education than anything else. The substandard wages I make after 20+ years of employment with KDOT prohibit my wife and I from attending many of our children's functions, keeping us from taking part in their achievements.

Additionally, my experience with KDOT has enabled me to save the state money by teaching and training the new hires on issues such as safety. I could have left the state to work in a better paying job about 10 years ago, but I stayed because I love this job.



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It is extremely difficult to objectively measure the quality and quantity of an individual's work in jobs that are service delivery focused such as public sector jobs. Therefore, evaluation systems must rely on the opinion and judgment of supervisors. There are too many variables of the day to day job that cannot simply be judged by a tool of any measurement. Additionally, if your supervisor is solely responsible for determining your wage increases, individuals are less likely to reveal problems or conflicts that could ultimately hinder the quality of services provided, or decrease the communication that is necessary to improve services and delivery of service.

Throughout my 15 years, I have had four supervisors, none of which have been similar in personality, structure, or performance. Such turnover in supervisory staff can also mean a change in relationships, and therefore, raises, under this plan. I believe that the current system that includes funded step increases based on a "Satisfactory" rating should stay in effect. Again, this is not an issue of perceived inadequacies of the current pay plan or structure. This a matter of funding salary increases on a regular basis. If the current plan cannot be funded, how are we to know this new system will bring equity and fairness? Salary increases and pay should not be left to the opinion of a supervisor.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak, I would now be happy to answer any questions you may have.
