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Kansas Senate Votes to Confirm Governor Kelly’s Labor Secretary Pick, Amber Shultz

TOPEKA - In a 40-0 vote today, the Kansas Senate unanimously confirmed the appointment of Amber Shultz as the Kansas Secretary of Labor. Shultz will oversee the state Unemployment Insurance, Workers Compensation, Labor Market Information Services, Labor Relations, Legal Services and Industrial Safety and Health divisions.

“I appreciate the Senate’s swift confirmation of Secretary Shultz,” Governor Laura Kelly said. “Secretary Shultz has a wealth of leadership experience in technology and innovation - which makes her the perfect person to oversee our IT system modernization. She has already hit the ground running at the Department of Labor as we work to pay out essential benefits and modernize.”

“I am honored to have this opportunity and appreciate the Senate’s support to serve the people of Kansas,” Acting Secretary of Labor Amber Shultz said. “I look forward to working with the legislature, business community and Kansas workers to bring a long overdue modernization effort to our unemployment system – giving Kansans the level of service they deserve from this agency.”

Shultz brings over 25 years of experience in technology and innovation. She joined the Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) from the City of Lawrence, where she worked as the General Manager of Municipal Services and Operations. During her time there, she led the effort to rebuild the city’s enterprise and operational services and facilitate efficient data management.

Shultz began her professional career as a Research Specialist at the Kansas Data Access and Support Center at the Kansas Geological Survey, and has held many IT positions focused on innovation and modernization with different public and private organizations in both Kansas and Missouri.

Since Secretary Shultz began her tenure as Acting Secretary, she has been able to lead the agency through a number of major initiatives. These include the recent deployment of a new fraud mitigation software solution that has to date blocked approximately 6.4 million fraudulent login attempts, and last week KDOL announced that it had begun paying benefits to the recently passed federal American Rescue Plan Act without any delays or gaps. In addition, from Feb. 17 through March 17, KDOL has paid over $100 million dollars in state and federal unemployment benefits to Kansans in need.
Since March 15, 2020 KDOL has paid out over 4.2 million weekly claims totaling over $2.8 billion between regular unemployment and the federal pandemic programs. For more information, or to apply for unemployment benefits, go to www.GetKansasBenefits.gov.

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