



PROPONENT Testimony on HB 2464
For the House Higher Education Budget Committee
March 21, 2024
Matt Lindsey
President, Kansas Independent College Association

Chair Howe and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony related to House Bill 2464.

Kansas' Independent Colleges:

KICA represents all twenty-one accredited undergraduate degree-granting private non-profit colleges of Kansas. The members of KICA are all independent of KBOR. KBOR has no governing role (as it does for the six 4-year Regents universities), coordinating role (as it does for the community colleges, technical colleges, and Washburn University) nor general regulatory role (as it does for any for-profit college or college based outside of Kansas that wishes to operate here) regarding the KICA institutions, however we do seek to work in coordination with the public colleges and universities on issues that affect Kansas.

Support for HB 2464:

KICA and its colleges are strongly supportive of increasing student aid and statewide efforts to address college affordability, especially when those efforts are inclusive of the rights of each student to choose public or private colleges in Kansas. HB 2464 makes several changes to a program that supports all Kansans, including those who attend a non-profit college. These improvements, if funded, are appealing and overdue to maintain the value of the state scholarship program.

Requested Improvements:

KICA does suggest one amendment may be necessary to improve the bill. Section 1(e) of the bill defines non-profit colleges using some out-of-date criteria that are not consistent with other Kansas statutes.

Of particular note, the new language in Section 1(e) on page 2, lines 5 through 7, references institutions that are “accredited by the higher learning commission of the north central association of colleges and schools.” That name is no longer accurate because the Higher Learning Commission is separate from the North Central Association. The North Central Association dissolved in 2014. So, a simple improvement would be to merely point to “a not-for-profit independent institution of higher education that is accredited by the higher learning commission.”

An alternative – and more consistent - approach is to use the formulation used in other statutes that would define non-profit colleges as “any not-for-profit institution of postsecondary education that has its main campus or principal place of operation in Kansas, is operated independently and not controlled or administered by a state agency or subdivision of this state, maintains open

enrollment and is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency for higher education in the United States.”

We ask that if the committee chooses to move forward with HB 2464, that a change of this nature be made.

Conclusion

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on HB 2464. I am happy to answer any questions you may have or provide additional data as you request.