



To: House Higher Education Budget Committee
Representative Steven Howe, Chair

From: Sheree Utash, VP Workforce Development WSU
On behalf of Kansas Technical Colleges

Date: February 21, 2023

Re: Proponent House Bill 2290

Good afternoon! It is my pleasure to offer the support and endorsement of the Kansas Technical Colleges for House Bill 2290. HB 2290 would allow the affiliation of two of our members, Northwest Kansas Technical College and North Central Kansas Technical College with Fort Hays State University.

Having had experience with the affiliation between Wichita State University and WSUTech I can tell you that partnerships such as this bring benefits to Kansas and the affiliating institutions. In our case the affiliation has improved and enhanced synergies of co-enrollment, technical education completion with job placement and continued higher education. It has also strengthened workforce and economic development collaboration, and inter-institutional benefits in various areas such as supplies, contractual services, and more.

We believe that when institutions take the lead to develop a partnership like the one embodied in House Bill 2290 it is in the best interest of Kansas to support and foster their efforts. The institutions bringing this proposal forward have carefully evaluated the combination of regional needs, demographics and regional economic development in their decision-making process.

It is worth noting that the fiscal note for House Bill 2290 shows that its enactment would have a negligible fiscal effect on the State General Fund. In fact, the proposed affiliation has the potential to generate savings for the university and each technical college in the long-term by allowing the institutions to create synergies through collaboration to meet regional workforce needs, strengthen rural Kansas communities, and facilitate student access and success.

On behalf of Kansas Technical Colleges, I encourage you to pass House Bill 2290 favorably out of your committee.