

SESSION OF 2023

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2290

As Recommended by House Committee on
Higher Education Budget

Brief*

HB 2290 would authorize the affiliation of Northwest Kansas Technical College and North Central Kansas Technical College with Fort Hays State University (FHSU).

Affiliated Institutions

The affiliated institutions would be designated as FHSU-Northwest Kansas Technical College and FHSU-North Central Kansas Technical College and operated as technical colleges within FHSU. The powers and duties of the governing boards for these technical colleges would be transferred to FHSU, subject to the rules and regulations and supervision of the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR), and the boards would become industry or regional advisory boards appointed by the President of FHSU.

The bill would provide that the affiliated institutions would continue as technical colleges eligible for funding in the same manner as other technical colleges and offer programs approved by FHSU, including credential and degree programs that technical colleges are authorized to award.

Industry and Regional Advisory Boards

The new industry or regional advisory boards would be required to:

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

- Review programs at the affiliated institution with FHSU leadership to ensure alignment with industry and community workforce needs;
- Provide input relating to changes in each advisory board member's industry sector or region that affect academic programs;
- Perform any operational responsibilities or duties specified in the formal affiliation agreement; and
- Perform any other responsibilities as requested by the President of FHSU.

Admissions

The bill would provide that admission requirements for each respective institution would not be altered, and FHSU would not admit degree-seeking, first-time freshmen or transfer students to university programs who do not meet the applicable qualified admission standards.

Formal Affiliation Agreement

The bill would require a formal affiliation agreement between the affiliated institutions and FHSU to address the transfer of faculty, employees, and students and, subject to authorization by KBOR, all affiliated institution personnel would become FHSU personnel, with their employment deemed uninterrupted.

The affiliation would be effective after approval of the formal agreement by the Higher Learning Commission of North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The bill provides that should only one technical college choose to participate in the affiliation agreement with FHSU, the

provisions of the bill would be effective for the remaining institutions.

Legal Proceedings and Contracts

The bill would state that no legal proceeding, including criminal actions, would be eliminated by reason of the affiliation, and any legal proceeding could be allowed to be maintained by the affiliated institutions.

The bill would also state the affiliation would not affect any contract, agreement, or assurance in effect on the effective date of the bill (July 1, 2023).

Conforming and Technical Amendments

The bill would make other conforming and technical amendments to law regarding the technical colleges affiliated designation.

Background

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Higher Education at the request of Representative Howe.

House Committee on Higher Education Budget

In the House Committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by the Presidents of FHSU, KBOR, North Central Kansas Technical College, and Northwest Kansas Technical College, and a representative of the Technical College Association

The proponents stated this voluntary affiliation would increase student access to programs and post-graduate employment and strengthen relationships with community and business partners to address employment issues in rural

areas. The proponents also stated that accreditation, funding, and athletic programs would remain unique to each institution under the affiliation.

Written only-proponent testimony was provided by the Mayor of Hays and representatives of the Hays Chamber, Hess Services, and the Kansas Chamber.

No other testimony was provided.

Fiscal Information

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, FHSU and KBOR estimate enactment of the bill would have a negligible fiscal effect on the State General Fund.

Higher education; technical college; Fort Hays State University; Northwest Kansas Technical College ; North Central Kansas Technical College; State Board of Regents; Regents System; affiliation