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## HB 2428 Freedom from Indoctrination Act

Thank you, Chairwoman Estes and Members of the Committee on Education, I'm writing today as a citizen of Kansas, an educator with twenty-seven years of experience teaching full-time in higher education, and a taxpayer to express my strong opposition to HB 2428. Given my background and career, I have many issues with such examples of legislation, beyond the potential overreach it represents, usurping the power of the Kansas Board of Regents to set public education policy for higher ed institutions in the state. My short list of key grievances is as follows:

First, Section 1D of HB2428 states: "Nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or constrict the academic freedom of faculty or prevent faculty members from directing the instruction within such faculty member's own class or limit the free discussion of ideas in a classroom setting." The remainder of the bill violates the principle established in Section 1D because the bill defines and controls curriculum, academic programs, freshmen orientation, and general education based on a legislative definition of what is or is not appropriate content for students.

Second, HB2428 is at odds with the accreditation standards associated with multiple disciplines and professions, including but not limited to: education, social work, and nursing. Passage of HB2428 will result in the loss of vital programs in universities throughout Kansas because those programs will lose accreditation. It should go without saying, but I will spell it out here in case it is helpful: lost accreditation will naturally result in fewer students interested in pursuing majors not recognized by national organizations, and qualified faculty will not come to Kansas to teach in programs that are not accredited (what would be the point?). Some may not see this as inherently bad, but consider the need for social workers, teachers, and public defenders—and then consider the brain drain from these areas that may result from the passage of this bill. Finally, consider the financial implications to the individual universities losing the students and the state and local tax losses, as well, and I hope my concern becomes clearer.

Finally, Kansas is required by law to provide K-12 education. Kansas cannot meet its legal mandate if it does not legally allow for accredited education programs in Kansas. HB2428 effectively eliminates accredited education programs in Kansas and exacerbates the teacher shortage. Is it in the best interests of the state to pass laws that contradict and countermand already established laws, after they have already been debated and negotiated ad nauseam? That doesn't seem like a productive use of this committee's time, nor of the time of the House if this bill gets out of committee.

There are certainly many strong philosophical arguments I could bring to bear on this bill, but I hope the practical and logistical ones outlined above will be enough to provide you with pause.

Please consider the implications of your actions, and play out the scenario fully before you ask KBOR to “make it work.” There is not enough perceived gain compared with the realistic costs that will be accrued.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James M. Schnoebelen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James M Schnoebelen, Ph.D.