



NEUTRAL Testimony on HB 2523
For the House Higher Education Budget Committee
February 9, 2026
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Testimony:

Chairman Turk and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide neutral testimony related to House Bill 2523.

Kansas' Independent Colleges:

KICA represents all twenty-one accredited undergraduate degree-granting non-profit colleges in Kansas. The Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) has no governing role, coordinating role, or regulatory role for the independent colleges that KICA represents.

Affiliation:

We appreciate the sponsors of HB 2523 for the intentionality of including private non-profit colleges as options for affiliation in this legally permissive (rather than legally proscriptive) bill. As is clear in the text of the bill, the allowance for institutions to “affiliate” is not limited only to public universities and colleges. The protection of this choice for institutions shows a realization that the Kansas Legislature embraces a true statewide, all-hands-on-deck, approach to improving Kansas’ higher education ecosystem.

There are many communities and regions of the state where there are KICA institutions and community or technical colleges nearby. As we have detailed in previous discussions in this committee, KICA institutions have a great appreciation for the work of our partners in the community colleges and technical colleges and have pursued strong, mutually beneficial and respectful collaborations. HB 2523 makes sure not to impede further partnerships between our sectors.

At the same time, our neutrality on this bill overall reflects some uncertainty. Our partners in the community and technical college world have shared with us several technical and legal challenges around affiliation that the legislation either does not address or addresses awkwardly. Because we strongly believe our partnerships need to be based on mutual respect and cooperation, we hesitate to fully support HB 2523 until those issues are discussed more fully and an attempt is made to resolve those that can be resolved to the satisfaction of all parties.

Thank you for the opportunity to come before you. I am happy to answer any questions you may have or provide additional data as you request.