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Director of Government Relations & Legislative Affairs

Oral Testimony – Opponent

House Committee on Judiciary

HB 2348

February 12, 2025

**Chairperson Humphries and Members of the Committee:**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 2348.

Kansas NEA is a member-driven organization representing all 40,000 educators in the state of Kansas, including nearly 22,000 members and several hundred from the higher education community. The positions we advocate for are proposed, debated, and adopted by hundreds of members elected by their peers to attend our annual Representative Assembly.

KNEA's resolution on university tenure states:

*KNEA further believes that tenure, as determined by the courts, is a property right that, under the fourteenth amendment, cannot be alienated from a teacher except by academic due process appropriate to the institution and for just cause...*

HB 2348 represents a significant departure from that principle.

University tenure is a longstanding practice and a fundamental component of the employment process in higher education. It ensures that Kansas institutions of higher learning remain competitive in attracting world-class educators. Many top candidates seeking teaching positions in higher education choose institutions with strong tenure policies.

HB 2348 would not only have a chilling effect on recruitment but could also exacerbate faculty retention challenges. Weakening tenure protections could drive talented faculty members to states with stronger safeguards, diminishing the quality of higher education in Kansas.

Tenure also plays a vital role in preserving academic freedom. The freedom to teach without interference from non-academics seeking to impose their own judgments and ideologies on curriculum and pedagogy is a cornerstone principle of the academic experience. HB 2348 threatens to undermine this core American value.

Furthermore, HB 2348 would erode due process protections for educators. The debate surrounding education is often charged with passion, emotion, misinformation, and unnecessary controversy. Teachers are put in difficult and challenging situations on a very regular basis. Due process protection is critical. Any effort to weaken due process for Kansas educators is a step in the wrong direction.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to oppose HB 2348.

Thank you for your time.