



FORT HAYS STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF  
PSYCHOLOGY

Nuchelle Chance

Assistant Professor, Psychology

Fort Hays State University

February 10, 2025

House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Nuchelle L. Chance, Assistant Professor of Psychology at Fort Hays State University. I am writing to express my **strong opposition to HB 2348**, which proposes to strip tenure from faculty in Kansas. This bill is both devastating and deeply concerning.

1. According to the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between faculty, the administration, the Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR), and the Kansas Department of Administration, "The granting of tenure by the Board of Regents is not a right. Tenure will be granted when the faculty member has been shown to have the **proper qualifications** and when it is in the long-term interest of the university" (MOA, Article IX.1, pg. 11-12). Tenure provides faculty with employment, financial, and professional security to better serve the people of Kansas and to educate and mentor the next generation. Once tenured, faculty continue to be evaluated by their peers to ensure their qualifications and alignment with the university's interests.
2. HB 2348 undermines the longstanding contract between Fort Hays State faculty, the administration, and KBOR. As stated in the MOA, conditions of employment, including tenure, are determined through consultation with the faculty bargaining unit. HB 2348 violates this requirement.
3. The employer recognizes FHSU-AAUP as the exclusive representative for the University Faculty Bargaining Unit for addressing grievances and conditions of employment, as certified on May 5, 2000, by the Kansas Public Employee Relations Board (PERB) in case number 75-UDC-1-1999 (MOA, Article II.1, pg. 1).
4. Furthermore, **working toward tenure does not negate merit**. Tenure-track faculty undergo rigorous evaluations based on performance, research, teaching, and service. Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives foster a more inclusive environment without compromising standards of excellence. In fact, DEI initiatives enhance the academic atmosphere by bringing diverse perspectives and fostering innovation. Attacks on DEI initiatives undermine progress toward a more inclusive academic community.
5. This bill would strip the property rights of thousands of faculty across the state. Academic freedom, a fundamental principle of tenure, protects faculty across the political spectrum. Tenure enables faculty to pursue and teach the truth within their disciplines, even when their research is unpopular or not endorsed by administrators.
6. **Kansas is already facing challenges, including economic stagnation and the outmigration of young people.** The removal of tenure would make Kansas universities less attractive to top-tier faculty, diminishing the quality of education and research. This would further discourage young people from staying in or relocating to Kansas.



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7. Tenure provides the stability necessary for faculty to engage in long-term research and community projects that **benefit the state**. It allows faculty to advocate for academic freedom and innovation without fear of retribution. **Stripping tenure would undermine these critical functions and harm the state's ability to compete nationally and globally.**
8. HB 2348 would **negatively affect national university rankings and accreditations** with the Higher Learning Commission. Universities across Kansas would be perceived as weaker, leading to potential revenue losses from grants, tuition, and other funding sources.
9. In summary, gutting tenure as proposed by HB 2348 will harm Fort Hays State University and our students from Western Kansas, who deserve a university that can attract and retain talented faculty members. These faculty members play a crucial role in providing innovative solutions and preparing our students to lead this state.

I urge you to reconsider HB 2348 and recognize the vital role that tenure plays in maintaining the quality and integrity of higher education in Kansas. Protecting tenure is essential for the future prosperity of our state and the well-being of its citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nuchelle L. Chance".

Nuchelle L. Chance, Ph.D.