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DR. KIRK HASKINS  
53RD DISTRICT

February 10, 2025

**Opposition testimony – HB 2348: Removing faculty tenure as an entitlement or property interest**

Chairperson Humphries and Colleagues of the Committee:

In representing the voters of House District 53, where public education and academic freedom are highly valued, I write in strong opposition to HB 2348. This bill seeks to undermine faculty tenure protections at Kansas public universities, weakening the quality of education, eroding academic freedom, and making it harder for our state to attract and retain top faculty.

Faculty tenure is a critical safeguard for academic freedom, ensuring that professors can teach, research, and publish without fear of retaliation or political pressure. The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) affirms that tenure "protects the rights of faculty to teach, research, and publish freely without outside influence" ([AAUP, 2021](#)). HB 2348, as written, would severely limit these protections. It implies that current tenured faculty could be fired and that future professors would never be eligible for tenure. This directly contradicts the principles of academic freedom and poses serious legal risks.

If passed, this bill would likely face federal litigation, as it violates both constitutional protections and existing federal court rulings regarding property rights in employment. The [Miracle v. Hush case \(2023\)](#) affirmed that Kansas faculty tenure is considered a property right under the U.S. Constitution. By removing tenure protections, Kansas and any institution that enacts this policy would be in direct violation of these established federal precedents. This could result in costly and protracted federal litigation for both the state and individual institutions.

The danger of HB 2348 is compounded by the ongoing state funding cuts. The Kansas House Higher Education Budget Committee recently heard testimony from the presidents of all Kansas public universities, who expressed concern that continued funding cuts would force them to raise tuition and fees, effectively imposing a hidden tax on Kansas families. Even worse, they testified that these cuts could lead to the release of tenured faculty as a direct result of insufficient state support.

If we were to fully fund our public universities, they would not be forced into making such drastic decisions. Instead of attacking tenure, we should focus on ensuring that universities have the resources they need to provide quality education without jeopardizing faculty job security.

Kansas public universities contribute significantly to our state's economy through research and innovation, particularly in sectors like healthcare and construction. According to the [Kansas Board of Regents \(2021\)](#), research activities at these institutions drive related industries, generating an estimated \$1.3 billion in economic benefits through job creation and long-term financial gains (p. 8). Weakening tenure protections and continuing to cut funding would not only harm our educational system but also jeopardize the future economic growth and job opportunities these universities help generate for Kansas.

I urge this committee to reject HB 2348, recommend investing more in Kansas higher education, and ensure that Kansas continues to provide accessible, high-quality education for our students and future workforce.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Rep. Kirk R. Haskins, Ed.D.  
Kansas House District 53 - Topeka

## References

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