

February 10, 2025

Dear Respected Legislators,

My name is Tucker Jones, and I am a proud resident of Topeka Kansas where I work as an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Washburn University.

I am writing to respectfully, and independently testify in opposition to HB2348. Section 1(a) of HB 2348 states that “tenure shall be discretionary and conditional.” Speaking from experience, the tenure process at Washburn University is already operated on a discretionary and conditional basis. According to the Washburn University Faculty Handbook (Section V[A]):

The [University] President may terminate the services of a member of the faculty at any time, for cause. Cause for termination consists of demonstrated incompetence or dishonesty in teaching or research; substantial and manifest neglect of duty; personal conduct which substantially impairs the individual's fulfillment of his/her University responsibilities; engaging in or substantially contributing to actions materially disruptive to the effective operations of the University; substantial falsification of credentials; or violation of other faculty, staff, or student's civil rights.

Given this policy, HB2348 is unnecessary. If HB2348 were to be implemented, my colleagues and I are concerned that this will negatively impact the excellent educational opportunities that are offered at all institutions of higher education throughout our great state. Tenure is used to make sure only the best and brightest educators are retained. Without tenure, our faculty retention and recruitment efforts will suffer. This, in turn, will negatively impact enrollment rates and, more importantly, the educational experiences of Kansas students.

Although tenure does provide job security, faculty do not have unlimited rights with tenure. As previously mentioned, tenure is conditional and discretionary at every college and university in Kansas. To earn tenure, we have strict requirements that we must meet. Once tenure has been earned, faculty have even more expectations to maintain and provide excellent educational experiences for their students.

I moved to Kansas from Colorado because of the excellent educational experiences offered to me as a graduate student at Kansas State University. I have stayed and started a family in Kansas because of the excellent educational opportunities offered to students at Washburn University. God willing, my children will also remain and pursue educational opportunities in Kansas. In order to ensure that all Kansas students (including my/our children) have access to excellent educational opportunities that can only be found in our state, please protect tenure and vote against HB2348.

Sincerely,

Tucker Jones, PhD
Assistant Professor of Psychology
Washburn University