



**Boost Workforce Training with  
Federal Workforce Pell Grants:  
Testimony Regarding Kansas Senate  
Bill 406**

*Presented to the  
Senate Committee on Education*

February 9, 2026

Christian Barnard, *Visiting Fellow*  
FGA Action

Chair Erickson, Vice Chair Thomas, Ranking Member Sykes, and members of the committee, thank you for considering this written testimony. My name is Christian Barnard, and I am grateful to submit this testimony on behalf of FGA Action, which promotes commonsense reforms across a range of policy areas, including education. I strongly encourage your support for Senate Bill 406 (S.B. 406).<sup>1</sup>

On July 4, 2025, President Trump signed the One, Big, Beautiful Bill Act into law.<sup>2</sup> Among its many provisions, the law expands Pell Grants to cover short-term workforce training. Historically, Pell Grants have been limited to traditional college credential programs lasting at least a semester, even as community and technical colleges increasingly shifted toward shorter, job-focused training. But under the new federal law, low-income students in workforce training initiatives that lead to industry-recognized credentials can receive federal assistance through Workforce Pell Grants.

This federal reform will only benefit Kansas students if the state implements it quickly and effectively. Workforce Pell Grants will be available beginning in July of this year, and only programs approved by the state will qualify for the new funding. S.B. 406 ensures Kansas is ready by establishing clear responsibilities for the Kansas Workforce Board and creating a pathway for approving as many high-quality programs as possible.

Federal law also provides strong expectations for which programs should qualify. Eligible programs must have training completion and job placement rates of at least 70%, and completers must achieve adequate wages to justify program costs. Additionally, consensus negotiated rules from the U.S. Department of Education make clear that approved programs should align with Kansas's existing workforce development plans under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, Kansas does not need to start from scratch in developing an approval process for Workforce Pell. S.B. 406 leverages the state's existing workforce development infrastructure and casts a wide net for quality programs, positioning Kansas for prompt, effective implementation. That matters because Kansas community and technical colleges already offer programs that could be eligible for this funding, such as emergency medical technician, welding, commercial driving, and more.<sup>4</sup>

This bill is a timely, practical step to ensure Kansas can benefit from new federal resources, expand opportunity for low-income students, and connect more residents with good-paying jobs. For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support S.B. 406. Thank you again for the opportunity to submit testimony.

---

<sup>1</sup> Kansas SB 406, 2026, [https://www.kslegislature.gov/li/b2025\\_26/measures/sb406/](https://www.kslegislature.gov/li/b2025_26/measures/sb406/)

<sup>2</sup> Congress.gov, H.R. 1 – One Big Beautiful Bill Act, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/1/text>.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of Education, “Draft Consensus Language from December 12, 2025,” AHEAD Committee, <https://www.ed.gov/media/document/draft-consensus-language-workforce-pell-december-12-2025-113151.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> “Programs (A-Z by Type of Degree),” Kansas City Community College (2026), <https://www.kckcc.edu/academics/explore-programs/degrees-certificates.html>