



Chairwoman Williams and Members of the Committee,

We appreciate this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of HB 2144.

While Kansans are well aware of the problems percolating in higher education much of that discussion focuses on 4-year institutions. It stands to reason that as those challenges are addressed across country, changes and new challenges will also come to community colleges. Community colleges have always served as a vital avenue for those looking to continue their educational after graduating from high school. Arguably, they will only be more important as concerns about affordability and career track (i.e., appropriateness of bachelors v. associate/certificate program) make for a better educational investment.

In short, the provisions of HB 2144 help protect taxpayers by bringing transparency to community college budgets, taxing authority, and overall state support. The bill would also bring better information to prospective students regarding transferability of credits, cost of education, and various other data that will equip them to make better decisions about the opportunities provided by a given institution.

There is no panacea in providing educational success in post-secondary education but HB2144 is a good step in the right direction. Lots of small decisions and legislative initiatives brought us to the challenges we face today. It will take lots of small decisions and legislative initiatives to provide the educational opportunities our high school graduates and taxpayers deserve. But, HB 2144 is one of those initiatives that brings better educational opportunities to those continuing their educational careers in Kansas' community colleges while also providing additional protections for Kansas taxpayers.