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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MARI-LYNN POSKIN
20TH DISTRICT

February 14, 2023

RE: Proponent Testimony for HB 2081

Chairman Thomas and House Education Committee,

I'm delighted that HB 2081, creating the "Aspiring Future Teacher of the Year" scholarship program is being heard this year.

It was inspired by the Joint House and Senate Education meetings to honor the eight annual members of the Kansas Teacher of the Year team. I remember listening to each of their professional accomplishments and the personal stories that lead them to being such committed and exceptional educators and thought, "We need more of you!"

And we do...Kansas is facing a teacher shortage crisis as teachers leave the profession and fewer students are enroll in our teacher education programs. Costs to obtain licensure continue to rise. This scholarship will encourage outstanding students to pursue teaching as a profession, lower their costs, and keep them in Kansas.

I urge the committee to work the bill, taking into consideration all stakeholder suggestions, and report it favorably for passage. The heart of the bill relies on these three principals:

- 1) Honor the annual Kansas Teacher of the Year team and their individual journeys to excellence,
- 2) Tell eight aspiring education students that we see a future Teacher of the Year in them, and
- 3) Maintain the merit-based scholarship model.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mari Lynn Poskin". The signature is fluid and cursive.