



**PROPONENT Testimony on HB 2539
For the House Education Committee
February 13, 2024**

**Matt Lindsey
President, Kansas Independent College Association**

Chairman Thomas and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony related to House Bill 2539.

Kansas' Independent Colleges:

KICA represents all twenty-one accredited undergraduate degree-granting private non-profit colleges of Kansas. The members of KICA are all *independent* of KBOR. KBOR has no governing role (as it does for the six 4-year Regents universities), coordinating role (as it does for the community colleges, technical colleges, and Washburn University) nor general regulatory role (as it does for any for-profit college or college based outside of Kansas that wishes to operate here) regarding the KICA institutions, however we do seek to work in coordination with the public colleges and universities on issues that affect Kansas.

KICA and the Promise Scholarship:

KICA was a proponent of the Promise Scholarship when it was proposed several years ago. While KICA institutions are not as heavily invested in associate's degree programs and certificates as our friends in the community colleges and technical colleges, several KICA institutions do offer 2-year associate's degrees and undergraduate certificates in fields that are considered "high-wage and high-need." Thus, we remain grateful that the Legislature ensured that those students who chose a KICA pathway for those degrees were supported equitably, even if our students represent a small sliver of the overall Promise Scholarship recipients.

Seven KICA institutions are approved currently to offer Promise Scholarships, mostly for degree programs in healthcare and IT. Those institutions are:

- Central Christian College of Kansas
- Cleveland University-Kansas City
- Donnelly College
- Hesston College
- MidAmerica Nazarene University
- Newman University
- University of Saint Mary

In total, KICA institutions distribute an average of \$240,000 in Promise Scholarship funds each year (out of the \$10 million appropriated).

Out-of-State Students:

KICA supports the change proposed in HB 2539. To grow the Kansas economy, Kansas will need to do a better job of attracting and retaining talented individuals from other states. Our private institutions do this well, with 48% of our total enrollment coming from out-of-state and approximately one-third of those out-of-state students choosing to stay and make a life in Kansas.

Because the Promise Scholarship is a service scholarship with a defined commitment that individuals must make to live and work in Kansas for two years after completing their college program, it is in the state's interest to allow out-of-state students to apply for the scholarship. Doing so will add to a toolkit that is critical in retaining those students after they come to Kansas, and in the long run improve the efficacy of the Promise Scholarship program in growing our workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to come before you on this issue. I am happy to answer any questions you may have or provide additional data as you request.