



KANSAS APPLESEED
Justice for all.

TESTIMONY OF BENET MAGNUSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
KANSAS APPLESEED CENTER FOR LAW AND JUSTICE
BEFORE THE KANSAS HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION BUDGET

IN OPPOSITION TO HOUSE BILL 2643

FEBRUARY 19, 2018

My name is Benet Magnuson; I am the executive director of the Kansas Appleseed Center for Law and Justice, a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to the belief that Kansans, working together, can build a state full of thriving, inclusive, and just communities.

Kansas Appleseed strongly opposes House Bill 2643.

Kansas's current in-state tuition policy builds a stronger state through economic growth and prosperity; House Bill 2643 would damage that. Without access to in-state tuition, many students who currently qualify under K.S.A. 76-731a would not attend our institutions of higher education at all. Seven of the ten occupations expected to grow most quickly over the next few years will require post-secondary education. Without strong policies, Kansas will become less competitive with other states as we fall short of the college degrees needed to grow our economy. By providing meaningful access to college for all Kansas high school graduates, K.S.A. 76-731a means more tuition dollars for our state, higher wages, more purchases, more revenue, and more economic growth in Kansas.

Kansas's current in-state tuition policy is fair to both Kansas high school graduates and those who live in other states. To qualify for in-state tuition under K.S.A. 76-731a, Kansas high school students must meet all academic requirements for admission to institutions of higher education in Kansas and a) must have attended high school in Kansas for at least three years; b) must graduate from high school in Kansas or receive a GED; and c) must sign an affidavit attesting that they have already applied for Lawful Permanent Residency or will do so as soon as they are eligible. Because of these strict standards, the Kansas Board of Regents, the Kansas Association of School Boards, and the Kansas National Education Association all support K.S.A. 76-731a, which allows our institutions of higher education to recruit highly qualified students.

Our current in-state tuition policy is compatible with federal laws; K.S.A. 76-731a allows Kansas to move forward in an environment badly broken by congressional gridlock. K.S.A. 76-731a does not violate federal law; in fact, several others states have also enacted similar laws, none of which have been struck down by the courts.

Respectfully submitted,

Benet Magnuson
Executive Director