



455 SE Golf Park Blvd
Topeka, KS 66605
785.234.0878
www.kacap.org

Partners in America's Poverty Fighting Network

Testimony for House Committee on Higher Education Budget
House Bill 2643
February 19, 2018
Scott Anglemyer, Kansas Association of Community Action Programs

Chairman Jones and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the membership of the Kansas Association of Community Action Programs (KACAP) in opposition to HB 2643. KACAP is the membership association for Community Action Agencies in Kansas that are working to create economic opportunity and end poverty in their communities. Our member agencies work to better focus local, state, private, and federal resources to assist low-income individuals and families become more self-sufficient. Together, these agencies provide services to over 14,000 low-income Kansans each year.

Our agencies understand how important education is in helping low-income people escape poverty. At the same time, we are seeing an increasing share of the people we serve having contact with the state's foster care system. Our outreach staff have worked with a number of foster care youth who have "aged out" of the system, so we know the difficulty that these youth face with so little support. Because of these challenges and the growth of foster care caseloads in Kansas, KACAP has become active in advocating for reforms, including increasing supports for "aged out" youth.

HB 2643, however, is not consistent with that objective. While it directs savings from ending in-state tuition for undocumented college students to defray the costs of tuition waivers for aged out foster care youth, the bill itself creates no new support for these students. It merely represents an accounting change. Foster care youth do not benefit from this bill. Undocumented residents trying to improve their lives through education certainly do not benefit, and will be harmed. The only apparent beneficiaries of this bill are the universities, and the savings that they realize make up only a minuscule share of their total budgets.

In our view, HB 2643 creates almost no benefit, but causes substantial harm. As several conferees have noted, HB 2643 pits one group of disadvantaged Kansans against another, and truly is a solution seeking a problem. We urge you to reject this bill.

KACAP Member Agencies and Board of Directors

Community Action, Inc.
East Central Kansas Economic Opportunity Corporation
Economic Opportunity Foundation
Harvest America Corporation

Mid-Kansas Community Action Program
Northeast Kansas Community Action Program
Southeast Kansas Community Action Program
Wichita Sedgwick County Community Action Partnership