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MEMORANDUM

To: Chairman Howe and members of the Higher Education Budget Committee

From: Office of Revisor of Statutes

Date: March 20, 2024

Subject: **HB2843** — Establishing a scholarship task force to study scholarship programs and creating the Kansas academic excellence scholarship program to replace the Kansas ethnic minority scholarship program.

House Bill 2843 establishes a scholarship task force to study scholarship programs and would replace the existing Kansas ethnic minority scholarship program with the Kansas academic excellence scholarship program.

New section 1 establishes the nine member scholarship task force as follows:

- (1) The chairperson of the senate committee on education or the chairperson's designee, who shall be a member of the senate;
- (2) the ranking minority member of the senate committee on education or the ranking member's designee, who shall be a member of the senate;
- (3) the chairperson of the house of representatives committee on higher education budget or the chairperson's designee, who shall be a member of the house of representatives;
- (4) the ranking minority member of the house of representatives committee on higher education budget or the ranking member's designee, who shall be a member of the house of representatives;
- (5) one member representing state educational institutions appointed by the state board of regents;
- (6) one member representing technical colleges appointed by the Kansas technical college association;
- (7) one member representing community colleges appointed by the Kansas association of community colleges;
- (8) one member representing independent colleges and universities appointed by the Kansas independent colleges association; and
- (9) one member of the state board of regents or an employee of the state board of regents designated by the state board.

Members shall be appointed to the task force on or before July 1, 2024. The chairperson of the house of representatives committee on higher education budget shall call the first meeting of the task force. The bill further provides that the task force shall:

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(1) Study each scholarship and scholarship program that currently exists in the state, including, but not limited to, those scholarships available to Kansas residents who are first generation college students;

(2) make recommendations with regard to such scholarships; and

(3) report to the senate committee on ways and means and the house of representatives committee on appropriations on any such recommendations on or before January 15, 2025.

Regarding other provisions of the bill, currently, Kansas law provides for a Kansas ethnic minority scholarship program that provides financial assistance to students who are Kansas residents, have financial need, demonstrate academic ability and identify as members of any of the following racial or ethnic groups: African American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander or Hispanic.

HB 2843 would change the name and eligibility requirements for the scholarship program. The program would be named the Kansas academic excellence scholarship program. To receive the scholarship, recipients would have to be a Kansas resident, have financial need and demonstrate academic ability.

The bill amends the definition of “eligible institution” and the remaining provisions of the scholarship award remain the same. The award is subject to appropriations and may be in an amount not to exceed 75% of the average amount of total tuition and required fees for full-time in state students. The scholarship is for up to eight semesters with an additional two semesters if the recipient’s program requires a fifth year of study. The award can be renewed if the recipient maintains full-time enrollment at an eligible institution, remains in good standing and makes satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree or certificate. The scholarship program requires the state board of regents to adopt rules and regulations for administering the program.

HB 2843 would take effect upon publication in the Kansas Register.