



**PROPONENT Testimony on SB 383
For the Senate Transportation Committee
February 18, 2020**

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Chairman Peterson and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony related to Senate Bill 383.

Kansas' Independent Colleges:

KICA represents the twenty independent colleges of Kansas, all of which are not-for-profit institutions of higher education, all of which offer undergraduate degrees, all of which have their principal campus in Kansas, all of whom are regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, and all of whom maintain an open enrollment policy consistent with Kansas statutes.

The state of Kansas, via the Kansas Board of Regents, has specific obligations governing “private and out-of-state” educational institutions, per the Private and Out-of-State Post-Secondary Educational Institutions Act. All nineteen KICA institutions are exempt from that statute. Thus, for the independent members of KICA, 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 regulatory role (as it does for any for-profit college or college based outside of Kansas that wishes to operate here). Furthermore, KICA institutions do not receive any direct institution funding from the state of Kansas, as befits our independent status.

KICA has a partner organization, the Kansas Independent College Foundation (KICF). The KICF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, originally established in 1952, to develop, promote, and direct unified approaches to selected corporations, foundations, and individuals for financial support of Kansas’ independent colleges and universities, to strengthen the ability of those institutions to attract charitable support for their missions and programs, and to develop and implement approaches to leverage the collective assets and purchase power of Kansas’ independent colleges and universities to achieve operational cost savings for the individual institutions.

KICF's Role in Providing a Proud Educator License Plate:

During this biennium of the Kansas legislative session, KICA has supported various permutations of an effort to create the “proud educator” license plate (see HB 2071 and HB 2489). These are reflected in Section 3 of SB 383. KICF acts as a strategic and financial partner to the Kansas Educator Support Foundation.

Sixteen of the twenty KICF institutions offer teacher education programs, and annually we award about 19% of the bachelor’s degrees in teacher education in Kansas. Thus, we care deeply about the work of educators in Kansas, as well as the young people they educate. We applaud any effort to demonstrate further support for educators. We support SB 383 and encourage the committee to approve it favorably for passage. I am happy to answer any questions you may have or provide additional data as you request.

Amendment Addressing Designated Partners:

While we support SB 383, KICA requests a slight change that may improve the implementation of the bill’s provisions. The change affects Section 4(h) of the bill, starting on page 7.



Currently, the bill language would require payments from the royalty fund(s) for each license plate go to the respective entity (Knights of Columbus, American Legion, Kansas Educator Support Foundation). Because KICF is serving as the fiscal partner for the Kansas Educator Support Foundation, and because we anticipate others may wish to have the option to operate similarly, we suggest that the language on page 7, starting in line 23, be restated as follows:

Payments from the royalty fund shall be made to the entity benefiting from the issuance of the distinctive license plate, *or said entity's designee*, on a monthly basis.

Recommended Technical Correction:

Section 5, subsection (a)(3) requires a change to accurately name the accrediting body for postsecondary institutions. The “north central association of colleges and secondary schools” is not the entity responsible for providing regional accreditation for Kansas-bases postsecondary institutions (public or non-profit). The correct entity should be identified as the “Higher Learning Commission” or “HLC”. In 2014, the HLC officially separated from the North Central Association. The latter now handles only K-12 issues while the HLC is focused on higher education.

Thus, we recommend amending Section 5, subsection (a)(3) to read:

(3) any not-for-profit independent institution of higher education that is accredited by the higher learning commission, is operated independently and not controlled or administered by the state or any agency or subdivision thereof, maintains open enrollment and the main campus or principal place of operation of which is located in Kansas;