

**House Appropriations
Testimony supporting HB 2101
Associated General Contractors of Kansas
Mike Gibson, Executive Vice President
February 2, 2021**

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Kansas support HB 2101, extending the university engineering initiative. The initiative has proven itself and has delivered impressive results for our students and businesses in Kansas. This initiative is a meaningful part of our industries effort, Build up Kansas, to attract and retain talent in Kansas. Build Up Kansas has recently added a splash page showcasing our college partner’s construction programs at Ft. Hays State, Kansas State and Pittsburg State.

Build up Kansas College Degree Link: <https://buildupks.com/college-degree/>

As you may know, AGC of Kansas launched a Construction Industry Image/Workforce Recruitment Campaign – “Build Up Kansas” in 2018. Build Up Kansas targets the 17-22 year old women and men currently enrolled in vocational programs in over 125 high-schools, vo-tech centers and community colleges that partner with AGC. Over the last year we have visited with over 2,000 students across Kansas and provided valuable industry information on the many professional careers in our industry. Many of these students have shared the Build Up Kansas program with their parents on these career opportunities. Build Up Kansas has surpassed 500,000 website visits with an average of 4 plus minutes per visit. In addition, over 5000 visits have occurred to the HR Platform where AGC members are posting their job openings across the state.

We will argue with one point, however, starting salaries are significantly higher than the chart listed from the Kansas Board of Regents. Graduates coming out of these programs are making above \$61,000 according to our surveys. Architectural engineers and construction sciences graduates have had 100% placement. Two-thirds of the graduates stay in state and of the one third that leave, university tracking indicates seventy-five percent of them return.

Thank you for your support of this important initiative.

Mike Gibson
Executive Vice President

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