



**Overland
Park
Chamber™**

**To: Senator Rick Billinger and Members of the Senate Ways and Means
Committee**

**From: Kevin Walker, Senior Vice President of Public Policy
Overland Park Chamber of Commerce**

Date: 23 March 2021

The Overland Park Chamber is pleased to submit testimony in support of HB 2101. This bill expands the University Engineering Initiative Act (UEIA) for another 10 years. Considering the overwhelming success of the UEIA during its first 10 years we believe the extension is warranted.

When the current UEIA was established the goal was to support engineering students at our universities and increase the number of engineering graduates. To date, the University of Kansas, Kansas State University and Wichita State University have collectively produced 1,365 engineering graduates – a 56% increase over the number at the onset of the program. Furthermore, 95% of these engineering students are employed in the workforce or seeking additional education to support their careers.

Kansas and the Kansas City metro are home to world-class engineering firms. To retain our position as a world leader in this field it is important our universities continue to produce well-qualified students who will support the ongoing talent needs these leading firms need to thrive. We believe the UEIA has proven its worth and encourage you to support HB 2101.