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February 22, 2015

The Honorable Ron Highland  
House Standing Committee on Education  
Statehouse, Room 112-N  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Dear Representative Highland

SUBJECT: Testimony in support of HB 2139

It is my understanding that the House Education Committee will be debating HB2139 this coming Tuesday at 1:00 PM. I will not be able to attend the committee hearing but wanted to submit my testimony in writing for the committee's consideration.

I support HB 2139 and hope that it comes out of your committee unchanged and is passed by the legislature and enacted into law unchanged.

It was completely ludicrous in the first place to ever give persons without lawful immigration status resident status for the purpose of tuition and fees at our postsecondary institutions.

It has always been obvious that the reason this insane policy became law was because of pressure from certain commercial and political interests that encourage illegal immigration because of their desire for cheap labor and a hope for future votes. These interests want laws passed which attract illegal immigrants to our state. K.S.A 76-731a was an attempt to outbid other surrounding states for illegal immigrants. We were trying to offer more goodies than our neighbors in hopes of recruiting more illegal immigrants. The only word that can properly describe this kind of behavior is the word "corruption". And of course those hurt by corrupt laws are always the hard working law abiding citizens who always get stuck paying for the messes caused by other people's greed.

Just this afternoon I was visiting with a dear lady who takes care of my ninety -six year old father at a local nursing home. This dear soul has legally immigrated to our state from Ethiopia. She told me how she was able to legally come here because she was sponsored by her brother who himself had come to our country legally and became a citizen. However, she had to leave her husband in Ethiopia and come by herself because her brother could not sponsor both her and her husband. This dear woman and her husband agreed that they would suffer whatever separation was necessary for them both to come to our state legally. Her husband did finally join her here two and a half years later. My friend said that they could have paid people money to both come together illegally but added, " we wanted nothing to do with that – we wanted to be here legally".

Even though my friend and her husband did the right thing statutes like K.S.A. 76-731a discourage others from doing the right thing and our society suffers. On the other hand public policy which encourages legal immigration makes us strong. I encourage you and your committee to approve HB 2139 unchanged and do everything possible to help it become law. Thank you

Sincerely, Doug Johnson