

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Michael R. O'Neal at 3:30 p.m. on January 27, 1997 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Director, Legislative Research Department
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Cindy Wulfkuhle, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative Mason
Marlene Ernsting, Trustee, Barton County Community College
Brian Warren, Trustee, Butler County Community College
Floris Jean Hampton, Trustee, Dodge City Community College
Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards
Gerry Henderson, United School Administration
Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools

Others attending: See attached list

Representative Wempe requested a bill be introduced that would lower the percentage of members in a special ed Co-op to make changes in that Co-op.

Representative Morrison made the motion to have the request introduced as a committee bill. Representative Empson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Hearing on **HB 2015 - Community colleges, student residence, determination of state aid entitlement**, were opened.

Representative Mason appeared before the committee and explained that this bill would clean-up legislation that has caused trouble when considering residence status for military personnel.

Marlene Ernsting, Trustee, Barton County Community College, appeared before the committee as a proponent of the bill. She stated that this bill would replace regulations which were inadvertently repealed last year, thus precluding the community colleges from receiving state aid for education provided to the military and their dependents. (Attachment 1)

Representative Wempe inquired if there were any other changes in the bill. Staff replied that the only other change was the authority to determine who is a resident, for the purpose of state aid would now be with to the State Board of Education instead of community colleges.

Brian Warren, Trustee, Butler County Community College, appeared before the committee as a proponent to the bill. He told the committee that Butler County Community College has a long-term partnership with McConnell Air Force Base and believes that there is a critical need to continue providing education, training and related support services for active military personnel who reside in Kansas. The education program for McConnell has been far reaching: individuals have met the educational requirements for advancement. It provides incentive for them to remain in the military; dependents have received the training or retraining to become much needed contributors to the workforce of South Central Kansas; and the mission to "provide global reach by conducting air refueling and airlift where and when needed" has been facilitated through the delivery of education and training for its people. (Attachment 2)

Floris Jean Hampton, Trustee, Dodge City Community College, appeared before the committee in support of the bill, particularly New Section 3 which deals with the residency requirements for persons recruited by an employer. She believes that Dodge City Community College has provided a more qualified and trained supply of workers in the Dodge City area. (Attachment 3)

Hearing on **HB 2015** were closed.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, Room 519-S-Statehouse, at 3:30 p.m. on January 27, 1997.

Hearing on **HB 2003 - school districts, authorization of fee for pupil transportation, limitations**, were opened.

Ben Barrett, Legislative Research, gave the committee an overview of the interim committee report on pupil transportation. The interim committee recommended legislation that would permit school districts to charge fees for transportation of public and non-public school pupils who lives less than 2.5 miles from the school they attend.

Kansas law requires school districts to provide transportation to pupils who live more than 2.5 miles from school. Transportation of other pupils is optional to the local school board; however, this practice varies throughout the state. The transportation aid weight formula provides state aid to school districts that transports children 2.5 miles or more from home to school. Parochial school children are entitled to the privilege of transportation to and from school.

School districts are not allowed to charge fees or supplemental charges to pupils unless authorized by the legislature. The interim committee believed that by authorizing local school boards to impose fees for non-mandatory pupil transportation (less than 2.5 miles from home to school) would make it possible for some school districts to extend transportation services where they are not now available.

Representative Wempe asked if there was a provision in the bill that would allow those who can't afford to pay for transportation to receive either a reduced fee or free transportation. Mr. Barrett responded no. However, upon questioning by the Chairman, Mr. Barrett indicated that there didn't appear to be anything in the bill that would prevent a district from adopting a "means" test.

Mark Tallman, Kansas Association of School Boards, appeared before the committee as a proponent of the bill. He explained that many school districts transport children who live within 2.5 miles from school, however, the district only receives state aid for those who live over 2.5 miles, and has to make up the costs for those who live within 2.5 miles. Sometimes this additional cost effects what is available to offer the students in terms of classes and how many staff they are able to hire. (Attachment 4)

Gerry Henderson, United School Administration, appeared before the committee as an opponent to the bill. While he appeared in opposition to the bill he stated that if a school district wanted to charge a fee to help with transportation costs then they should be able to do so but he was concerned as to how it would work. (Attachment 5)

Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public Schools, appeared before the committee as an opponent to the bill. She stated that the heart of the issue is the safety of children. She suggested that the committee consider reducing the mileage threshold by one half mile per year for each year until all children are safely transported to school. (Attachment 6)

Hearing on **HB 2003** were closed.

The committee meeting adjourned at 5:15, p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for January 28, 1997.

Date: January 27, 1997

Individual Testifying: Marlene Ernsting

Representing: Barton County Community College Board of Trustees

Reason for Testifying: Support for House Bill Number 2015

Reasons to Support HB 2015:

- HB 2015 replaces regulations which were inadvertently repealed last year
- Action taken last year precludes the colleges from receiving State aid for education provided to the military and their dependents
- Existing FY 97 budget already includes the funds (no new funds needed)
- Barton County Community College served 2452 unduplicated headcount students (military and dependents) in Fall 1996.
- Education is desired by individual members of the military
- Military is placing a greater emphasis on education
- It is a call of patriotic duty
- Sound State economic development policy

Sound Economic development policy for the following reasons:

- Fort Riley's Military Base employs 10,000 military personnel
- They and their dependents pay sales taxes, various State fees, and property taxes
- Kansas vendors are positively impacted by the Fort's presence
- Military children attend public schools with State support
- Military personnel and dependents receive other State and local tax supported services

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- Many who conclude their military service at the Fort remain in Junction City, Manhattan, and Kansas, adding to the local economy
- Military dependents at Fort Riley strengthen the local workforce, providing opportunities for the area to attract and increase business and industry
- Helps military understand that Kansas is interested in supporting their educational goals
- Support of the military's goals helps the military understand that Kansas is interested in keeping them in Kansas

If Kansas community colleges are unable to provide the education the military needs:

- Other institutions from outside the State, who have less restrictive regulations, will come into Kansas and on base, to meet the needs
- Military may contemplate actions which will allow them to secure the training they need in other locations
- In either situation, dollars and employment opportunities are sent outside of Kansas
- Kansas' community colleges lose a vital opportunity to serve a significant part of their community and are negatively impacted financially

Barton County Community College has had a successful partnership at Fort Riley for ten years. The College and the Fort would like to continue this successful relationship. Therefore, we request that you support House Bill Number 2015, which will allow the community colleges to receive aid entitlements for providing education to the military. Again, this action will not create a demand for new funds in the FY 1997 budget; it will only allow us to receive existing and planned funds in return for the educational opportunities the colleges provide.

Testimony in favor of House Bill No. 2015
by Brian Warren, Butler County Community Board of Trustees
January 27, 1997

Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to testify in support of House Bill Number 2015. My name is Brian Warren, and I am a member of the Board of Trustees of Butler County Community College. As a representative of the community colleges of Kansas, I want to convey the importance of this bill, which allows us to maintain the current level of training and education for the businesses, industries and military installations within our state. Because of Butler County Community College's long-term partnership with McConnell Air Force Base, we are particularly focused upon the critical need to **continue** providing education, training and related support services for active duty military personnel who reside in Kansas.

Corrective Language and Financial Implications

We believe this level of training and education can best be achieved through restoration of residency status for military personnel for the purpose of determining state aid entitlements. House Bill Number 2015 includes the necessary corrective language, which addresses legislation that inadvertently was repealed near the end of the last legislative session. There are **no financial implications** associated with the corrective language, since the state aid entitlements to be restored were included in the budget for this fiscal year. However, the cost to Butler County Community College if the language is not corrected is significant and ultimately will result in impaired services to and a negative impact on McConnell Air Force Base.

Description of McConnell Air Force Base

As you probably know, McConnell Air Force Base is one of the largest contributors to the economy of South Central Kansas, as well as to the entire state. The base population includes more than 11,200 military members and civilian employees and encompasses over 3,000 acres with 220 industrial, administrative and community buildings. We feel that the vitality of McConnell Air Force Base and its continued economic impact on our region and our state can best be assured through the continuation of strong, state supported educational programs.

The Butler County Community College-McConnell Partnership

Since 1974 our college has met the educational needs of McConnell Air Force Base through delivering a regular, dependable schedule of degree required courses as well as technical training. Over the last five years, an average of 650 military personnel have enrolled in these courses each year. We also have provided key support services that are documented to facilitate student success. Among these services are student counseling and advising; assessment and course placement in English and mathematics; career planning assistance and guidance; peer tutoring; and independent study for special classes.

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Testimony in favor of House Bill No. 2015
by Brian Warren, Butler County Community Board of Trustees
January 27, 1997

Outcomes

The results of our college's education program for McConnell have been far reaching:

- Individuals have met the educational requirements for advancement, providing incentive for them to remain in the military;
- Dependents have received the training or retraining to become much-needed contributors to the workforce of South Central Kansas;
- The mission of the base "To provide global reach by conducting air refueling and airlift where and when needed" has been facilitated through the delivery of education and training for its people.

Recognition of Partnership

Twice since our affiliation with McConnell, over twenty years ago, we have been cited for providing an exceptional education program. In 1985 we received a written commendation from the base's Education Officer. Then, in 1993 the base was nominated for the Nathan Altschuler Award, established to give Air Force-wide and national recognition to those education centers demonstrating outstanding achievement in providing and managing voluntary education program opportunities. Our college was cited as playing a key role in this nomination. Clearly, it is a great reflection on our state's system of higher education to be affiliated with this kind of recognition.

Critical Need for Support

According to Henry Singer, a former Education Services Officer with the Air Force, he stated in correspondence to our college, "Many of the advantages which are provided for us by both you and the state of Kansas are routinely accepted by our students. But you and I know how much difference a supportive attitude can make."

Conclusion

Today, I ask that you also recognize the difference a supportive attitude can make and correct the inadvertent error made during the last legislative session. Your action now will allow us to continue the level of service we have provided in the past for our state's military installations, thus helping to ensure their continued success and contribution to the economic well-being of Kansas. As noted earlier, no new funds will be associated with your action; they already are included in the community college budget for this fiscal year.

Once again, thank you for allowing me to testify on behalf of this bill.

Brian Warren, Trustee
Butler County Community College



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 384TH SUPPORT GROUP (ACC)
McCONNELL AIR FORCE BASE, KANSAS

384 SG/CC
57837 Coffeyville St Suite 109
McConnell AFB KS 67221-3504

APR 21 1993

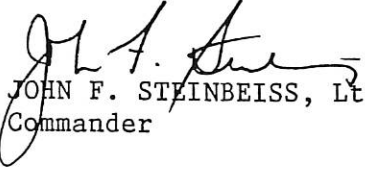
Dr. Rodney V. Cox
President, Butler County Community College
901 S. Haverhill
El Dorado KS 67042

Dear Dr Cox

The Air Force annually recognizes outstanding base educational programs. Each higher headquarters selects a representative to compete with education centers from other commands for the Nathan Altschuler Award. This award was established to give Air Force-wide and national recognition to those education centers demonstrating outstanding achievement in providing and managing voluntary education program opportunities. The award is presented annually in six categories based upon the military population served.

In March, the McConnell AFB education center was selected as the outstanding Air Combat Command education program for bases in category IV (population between 3,001 and 4,200) for 1992. We are now competing with other commands' category IV nominees for the Nathan Altschuler Award.

We have always felt the education program at McConnell is second to none. This is in large part due to the outstanding program your institution provides. We wish to thank you for your personal involvement, and the faculty, staff, and especially the director of the on-base program for their outstanding effort.


JOHN F. STEINBEISS, Lt Col, USAF
Commander

cc: Resident Director,
Butler County Community College



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 381ST COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (SAC)
MCCONNELL AIR FORCE BASE, KANSAS 67221

Carl Heinrich, President
Butler County Community College
901 South Haverhill Rd.
El Dorado KS, 67042

~~8 Feb 85~~

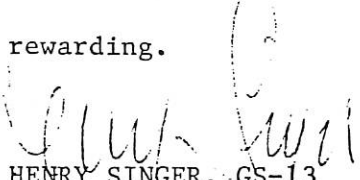
Dear Carl

As I am sitting here contemplating our meeting later this month, I am reminded just how much support McConnell AFB personnel get from your wonderful institution and from the state of Kansas. Many of the advantages which are provided for us by both you and the state of Kansas are routinely accepted by our students. But you and I know how much difference a supportive attitude can make. State support towards higher education has resulted in low tuition rates for military students and their dependents. Your willingness to provide classes on schedule and at a location convenient to our students has resulted in a participation rate which exceeds 20 percent of our base population.

Your leadership in education has provided the base with such programs such as electronics, graphics and classes in computer software which put our students on the cutting edge of the education mainstream.

Finally, your responsiveness and willingness to provide support for almost any and all educational demands has developed in a partnership which has been mutually beneficial for Butler County Community College and McConnell AFB. It has also been a partnership which has been exceptionally rewarding to me personally. Your staff and faculty have made my job a joy and a delight.

I hope that the next ten years of working together will be as pleasant and rewarding.


HENRY SINGER, GS-13
Education Services Officer

Peace is our Profession

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Education Committee
Kansas House of Representatives
January 27, 1997

I am Floris Jean Hampton, chairperson of the Dodge City Community College Board of Trustees. I am testifying in favor of House Bill 2015. While all seven of the residency provisions included in New Section 3 are important, I wish to direct my comments toward the last section. It deals with residency requirements for persons recruited by an employer.

Our state's economic growth depends in large measure on our ability to meet the needs of existing industries. Many industry representatives tell us that one of their critical needs is adequate training for new employees to ensure that they perform their jobs safely and efficiently.

Dodge City Community College takes an active role in employee training and retraining efforts for several area industries. Services provided to our community's two beef processing plants through Meat Processing Training courses taught by DCCC's Center for Business and Industry are an ideal illustration.

With 2,557 workers, Excel Corporation is the largest employer in our community. Excel hires 20 to 25 new employees each week, making prompt training essential for both the safety of these new workers and the efficient operation of the plant. "The training our new employees receive through the Meat Processing Training courses has truly helped us retain workers, and has helped our employees grow personally and professionally," said Jim Maher, Excel's Human Relations Manager.

National Beef, L. C. is another Dodge City employer whose workers benefit from safety and job familiarization training. The company's current work force totals 1,010, making it Dodge City's second largest employer. "It is critical that our new employees learn the workplace safety skills and overall job functions taught in the program," said Opie Astorga, National Beef's Resource Manager.

Ford County's low unemployment rate, at 3.9 percent, makes it necessary for these major employers to look outside our county for new workers. Many of these new workers are coming from out of state. House Bill 2015's provision amending residency requirements for employees recruited from other states will enable Dodge City Community College to continue offering the training that these new employees need.

It is clear that by working together, DCCC and local industries have provided a more qualified, trained supply of workers in Dodge City. This kind of educational training is important to our community.

In order for these courses to continue, Dodge City Community College needs the funding provided under the terms of this bill. Our college's 1996-1997 operating budget was based on the expectation of receiving this funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Attachment 3

KANSAS
ASSOCIATION



OF
SCHOOL
BOARDS

1420 S.W. Arrowhead Rd, Topeka, Kansas 66604
913-273-3600

TO: Senate Committee on Education
FROM: Mark Tallman, Director of Governmental Relations
DATE: January 26, 1997

RE: Testimony on H.B. 2003 - Authorizing Fees to Transport Student

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

We appear today as proponents of H.B. 2003, which would allow school boards to charge fees for the transportation of students who live within 2.5 miles of school. School districts do not receive state aid for these students, so the cost of such transportation must be transferred from the regular education budget. Many districts bus children who live within 2.5 miles anyway because of concerns over safety and family convenience.

Because the increase in school district general fund budgets has been less than inflation every year since 1992, school districts have only three ways to address their rising costs. First, they can attempt to cut programs and staff. However, they are limited by state program mandates, tenure laws and the need to maintain quality programs. Second, they can attempt to make more use of the Local Option Budget. However, some districts have already reached the 25% cap while others cannot voters to approve LOB because this increases property taxes. Third, they can raise student fees where authorized, despite the hardship it can impose on students and their families. However, school boards do not have statutory authority to impose fees for transportation of students to class.

KASB supports granting this authority for two reasons. First, we support the maximum ability to local boards to manage their educational program. Second, while most boards will be reluctant to impose this step, the alternative may well to be to simply end busing of students who live less than 2.5 miles from school. In many cases, that might be more detrimental to students than paying a fee.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Attachment 4



HB 2003

Testimony presented before the House Committee on Education
by Gerald W. Henderson, Executive Director
United School Administrators of Kansas
January 27, 1997

Mister Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to visit with the committee concerning the transporting of school children. I was not certain how I would ask to be listed on **HB 2003**, as a proponent or as an opponent. We believe that this is one of those issues best left to the judgement of local boards of education, and would therefore believe the authority suggested by this bill should be granted.

On the other hand we believe that if transportation for children is important for whatever reason, it should be available to **all** children equitably. One of my members stated at a recent meeting, "I will not have my buses picking up some children and not picking up others depending on the ability of parents to pay a fee." This bill and others like it are being discussed because of the growing problem with school district budgets. The possibility of charging a fee for transporting children surfaced when districts which were already picking up kids who live inside the two and one half mile limit, considered eliminating that service in order to save money. In our judgement, charging a fee is not the proper solution.

We would encourage the committee to report **HB 2003** unfavorably.

HB2003

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House Education Committee
Representative Mike O'Neal, chairman
H.B. 2003

January 27, 1997

Mr. Chairman, and members of the committee:

Wichita Public Schools provides transportation services for 17,245 students each day. Approximately 2672 are not eligible for state reimbursement. The district runs 400 buses each day. All buses run at least a double route and over half run triple routes. Wichita buses cover over 7 million miles each year to transport students.

The Board of Education has a hazardous route policy which determines the areas when students living less than 2.5 miles will receive transportation. The city of Wichita has worked closely with the district when upgrading crossing. Space available service for those under 2.5 miles but serves a very small number of parents wanting transportation.

Recently two elementary buildings which had had hazardous route designation lost that privilege when the city completed crossing upgrades. The Board of Education members were inundated by parents who argued correctly that the sidewalks and crossing lights did not change the type or nature of the businesses and houses children had to walk past. The Board made an exception for those two buildings. This illustrates the heart of this issue—safety of children.

The safe transportation of Kansas school children is a family issue. The legislature adopted the 2.5 threshold in 1964. The world in which we all live has changed dramatically. But the formula is stuck in the sixties.

Few issues stir emotion in parents as this. Attempting to explain that if they only lived a little further from the neighborhood school bus service would be available falls on angry ears. Board members across the state receive angry phone calls each fall from constituents who do not understand the state formula—for after all, in the parent's view it's the safety of a child at stake. Not the mileage reimbursement.

In Wichita concerned parents are invited to join the transportation budget committee. The budget process examines how business can be done in a more efficient and effective manner. The parents who join this process are aghast that the state formula reimburses only for students living more than 2.5 miles away. Our board adds \$1,095,092 for students under 2.5 miles.

I rise in opposition to this bill because it is a placebo. After all, those districts who currently lease bus services can basically do what this bill authorizes. Parents can contract with the leasing company. Board members have suggested this to parents in Wichita. We are not aware that any parents contracted for transportation.

Economics is why this plan is simply not feasible. Our buses run double and triple runs. These economies of scale are not available for few children or a neighborhood.

I would urge this committee to amend this bill to reduce the mileage threshold by one half mile per year for each year until all children are safely transported to school. Members of the committee, when you appropriate money for transportation aid, you are not giving money to the school districts. The school is simply the conduit—you would serve families. Families who struggle daily to provide transportation for their children. What's good for families is reducing the threshold.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would stand for questions.

Diane Gjerstad, Wichita Public School

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Attachment 6*