

Christy Moreno  
Testimony opposing SB 254  
February 27, 2025

Good morning, Committee Members,

I am Christy Moreno, advocacy officer with RevED. We are a non-profit education advocacy organization that works to promote the advancement of Latino youth in Kansas through public policy, civic engagement, direct educational supports, and educational talent pipeline development. I am here to testify in opposition of SB 254.

As an advocate for educational attainment, I stand before you today to express my unwavering support for safeguarding in-state tuition for immigrant students in Kansas. This topic is of paramount importance as it speaks volumes about our values as a society, our commitment to justice, and our belief in the power of education to transform lives.

Twenty years ago, through HB 2145, the Kansas legislature set an impressive example to the whole nation becoming the sixth state in the country to formalize the acknowledgement that higher education attainment of all students and residents in Kansas is inarguably good for individuals and good for the state.

According to various studies, people with a college degree increase their earning potential which leads to greater purchasing power, contributing to economic growth and spending and higher tax revenues. A more educated workforce leads to increased entrepreneurship, technological advancements, and innovation. As businesses grow, they create jobs, contributing to overall economic expansion as well as boosting the economy by increasing the value of goods and services. Access to higher education reduces income inequality and increases economic mobility; reduces poverty rates and creates a fairer and more prosperous Kansas.

Across the country and in Kansas, immigrant students of all statuses are studying to fill severe skills shortages in specific fields like healthcare, technology, and education, positioning themselves to better support their families and communities, as well as the regional and national economies. For 20 years this state has had access to in-state tuition because we've recognized the contributions that immigrant students bring to the state and we've committed to keeping their outstanding talent here.

Now is not the time to go back and strip brilliant and talented high school graduates of their access to resident tuition rates, on the contrary, it is time to reaffirm our commitment to professional advancement, economic success, and the development of the strong and educated workforce Kansas needs. Please say no to SB 254.

Thank you.