

Graciela Berumen

Private Citizen

2/23/2025

SB 254

Written Only

Chairman Mike Thompson and Members of the Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee,

My name is Graciela Berumen, I'm a voter, mother and higher education professional asking you to please remember that today is about Kansas, our values and the way that we choose to support the academic dreams of the youth that live in our state. In order to continue to protect access to education, the future of our community colleges, vocational schools and universities, as well as those that are employed by them, I urge you to vote no to SB 254.

My over thirteen years as an educator have provided me with the opportunity to work with many of the dedicated, hardworking and resilient undocumented youth that are proud to call Kansas home and will be negatively impacted by this bill. These Kansans love our state so much that even though they do not meet the qualifications to receive financial aid, they pay full instate tuition in order to attend our institutions. Most of them stay after graduation to work and give back to our state, passing SB 254 will create barriers that will force our Kansas high school graduates to pursue their future and education elsewhere. SB 254, is attempting to define paying full tuition as a public benefit, completely ignoring the negative impact creating more obstacles for our Kansas youth desiring to pursue higher education will create for our institutions, communities and state. We cannot afford to continue losing our state's highly educated youth, saying no to SB 254 is saying yes to our state's commitment to economic prosperity and education.

I thank you for your time and ask you to please continue to uphold our Kansas values by providing access to education for all the youth living in our state and vote no to the passage of SB 254.

Sincerely,

Graciela Berumen

404 1st Street

St. George, KS 66535