

Nubia I. Estefes

Private Citizen

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SENATE BILL 254

Written

My name is Nubia I. Estefes, and I am honored to be here today to share my story and express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 254. I come to you as a naturalized voting citizen. But this was not the case 15 years ago. 15 Years ago I graduated from Turner High School in KCK. While my future was a bit uncertain I knew that education was the key to success.

But unlike many of them, I faced a devastating reality—without in-state tuition, higher education would have been out of reach for me. I could not qualify for federal financial aid, and my family simply could not afford the full out-of-state cost of tuition

Thanks to the current in-state tuition policy, I was able to attend college. I worked tirelessly, balancing jobs and classes, and eventually earned my degree. I am now a U.S. citizen, a mother, and a professional who proudly calls Kansas home. I am completing my law school application this month, and looking forward to attending Law School here.

I know firsthand that students who qualify for in-state tuition are not looking for special treatment or a free ride—we are simply asking for the chance to pay our fair share and work toward a better future, just like our peers. We are investing in ourselves so we can contribute back to Kansas.

SB 254 would not only hurt students like I once was, but it would hurt Kansas as a whole. The young people impacted by this bill are already part of our communities—they are not strangers, they are our neighbors, our coworkers, and, in many cases, the future leaders of this state. Taking away their chance at higher education will only hold them back, and in turn, hold Kansas back. I am a community member that GIVES back fully to my community!