

Randy Lopez

Private Citizen

2/27/2025

SB 254

Written Only

Chair Thompson and Members of the Committee, thank you so much for giving me time to share my thoughts on SB 254 with you today. My name is Randy Lopez and I am a voter in Wyandotte County. I also serve as an elected member of the Board of Education for USD 500, Kansas City Kansas Public Schools. Today I am writing as a resident and citizen of Kansas City, Kansas today to encourage the committee to protect educational opportunities for all Kansans and vote no on SB 254."

First, I understand that we do have a broken immigration system that requires us to work together to find common ground and bring solutions. However, I don't believe that continuing to use rhetoric that creates fear, anxiety and division is the best approach. And SB254 would cause harm to our students, our residents in Kansas who want to pursue their educational journey.

As a citizen in Kansas, I want to see our young people work hard and seek excellence in their pursuit for education. An educated community would help all Kansas thrive. These young people want to be positive contributors to our society and are seeking their education to improve their lives and the lives of those around them. Repealing in-state tuition for undocumented students would negatively impact educational attainment and harm the Kansas economy. When talented students can achieve their college goals in Kansas, they stay in Kansas, bringing their knowledge and skills to our communities. Their college graduations and the jobs they qualify for with those degrees facilitate their economic mobility. They also contribute to overall prosperity in Kansas.

Supporting these students in their educational journey is also good for our economy.

Additionally, current state policy only gives them a chance to pay full price by offering in-state tuition for undocumented students (including DACA recipients); these students do not receive public (federal or state) grants and scholarships—or even subsidized student loans. Benefits

such as SNAP and Medicaid require a social security number to even apply; something that undocumented individuals DO NOT have. The notion that undocumented students receive extensive public resources is false and not based in existing law/statutes.

As someone who sees a student population and community that works hard to provide opportunities for growth and excellence, I am asking that you vote no on SB254.

Once again, I thank you all for hearing my story and thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to vote no of the passage of SB 254 to protect educational opportunities for all Kansans. Thank you.