

STATE OF KANSAS

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TESTIMONY REGARDING HB 2234

February 18, 2015

Chairman Highland and Committee Members, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and provide testify in **support of HB 2234**.

HB 2234 is simple and straight forward. However, for some unknown reason it has garnered much more attention than necessary from some in the news media. There have been misleading and flat-out false stories written about me and the contents of **HB 2234**.

My testimony will point out what the bill does and does not do.

First, what does **HB 2234** do? The bill requires the Board of Regents, Community Colleges, Universities and other institutions of higher learning to adopt a policy that disallows an employee from using their official title when writing a newspaper opinion column about a person who holds or is campaigning for public office, or a matter being considered by the Legislature or other public body. End of story – nothing else – that's what **HB 2234** does.

Now, what the bill does not do. It does not limit the constitutionally guaranteed first amendment right for anyone to express their thoughts or opinion on any topic; including an elected official or pending legislative matter.

Someway, somehow, for some reason, the news media has falsely written about **HB 2234** and what affect it would have on employees of our institutions of higher education.

Finally, to correct some false information written by the news media. I did not author **HB 2234**, I did not request that it be drafted, and it is not my bill. Out of courtesy to the Chairman of the Local Government Committee, I asked the Committee to introduce the bill.

Having said that, I fully support **HB 2234** and ask for the House Education Committee to pass it out favorably.

I will be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.