

To: Senate Ways and Means Committee

From: Kansas Association of Technical Colleges

Date: March 8, 2016

Chairman Masterson members of the committee thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony regarding Senate Bill 463. This testimony is provided on behalf of the Kansas Association of Technical Colleges. We are a seven college consortium promoting career and technical education in Kansas. We provide high demand, business driven technical education to our students. Our focus is workforce development and supplying business and industry with the employees they need to succeed.

We want to start by thanking members of this committee for their past support of technical education and workforce development in Kansas. We would be remiss if we did not once again draw particular attention to what we all now euphemistically refer to as SB 155. This initiative continues to be a tremendous success and continues to grow as more Kansas high school students enroll in postsecondary technical programs preparing them to enter the workforce in many cases with industry recognized certificates in high demand fields.

The emphasis on Career and Technical Education by the Kansas Legislature and the Governor has brought positive attention to the tremendous opportunities in technical education and the needs of employers for a skilled and prepared workforce. It has also dramatically demonstrated that the return on investment in technical education is unrivaled by any other education sector. Your continued investment in technical education is providing Kansan's with a path to a skillset that enhances their employability with training in high demand areas, allows them to work at a living wage and to even pursue further education if they choose while helping to hold down student loan debt. Technical education provides Kansans the skilled training for a prosperous future.

Senate Bill 463 eliminates the Economic Development Initiatives Fund which provides funding for the two-year sector, including our members, for capital outlay. That amount has been approximately \$2.5 million for most of that time. Those dollars are divided up between 16 two-year institutions of which all our members are recipients. The amounts range between \$126,000-\$330,000 depending on the size of the college. While it does not sound like a lot of money in today's world, it does enable us to fund the specialized facilities and equipment for the highly technical nature of our instruction.

Should Senate Bill 463 move forward favorably, on behalf of the members of the Kansas Association of Technical Colleges, we encourage you to continue to appropriate this very important source of funding from the state general fund. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

