

## MINUTES OF THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jean Schodorf at 1:40 p.m. on February 14, 2006, in Room 123-S of the Capitol.

Committee members absent:

Committee staff present: Kathie Sparks, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Theresa Kiernan, Revisor of Statutes  
Shirley Higgins, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Senator David Wysong  
Reginald L. Robinson, President and CEO, Kansas Board of Regents  
Senator Ruth Teichman

**SB 440—Qualifications for admission to state educational institutions**

Senator David Wysong testified in support of **SB 440**. He explained that the bill provided that a Kansas resident, who graduated from an out-of-state accredited high school and qualified under one of the three criteria for entrance, would meet the Kansas Regents university admission standard. (Attachment 1)

Reginald Robinson, President and CEO, Kansas Board of Regents, testified in support of **SB 440**, noting that that the bill would require the state universities to subject Kansas residents who graduate from out-of-state high schools to the “qualified admissions” standards adopted in 1996. He noted that the Board of Regents could achieve this goal through regulations; however, he had no objection to a proposal that sought to achieve the goal statutorily. (Attachment 2)

There being no others wishing to testify, the hearing on **SB 440** was closed.

**SB 305—Kansas Comprehensive Grant Program; students attending institutions accredited by American Association of Bible Colleges, eligibility of**

Senator Ruth Teichman testified in support of **SB 305**, which was introduced late in the 2005 legislative session. She explained that, for the past two years, the Legislature has allowed Barclay College to participate in the Kansas Comprehensive Grant Program through the appropriations process with an exemption to being accredited through the North Central Association/Higher Learning Commission, and the college had been working towards the North Central accreditation. Recently, there was a change in the administration of the college and a renewed commitment to the students and the college; however, the quest for accreditation had been put on hold until the college is back on a strong financial footing. (Attachment 3)

For the Committee’s information, Senator Teichman distributed a packet of information relating to Barclay College which included the following: a biographical outline; a letter from Herb Frazier, who became Barclay’s President in July 2005; a definition of the Kansas Comprehensive Grant; a copy of the comprehensive integrated standards for the Association for Biblical Higher Education; a list of the Barclay College faculty and their credentials; and letters from four Barclay students who received funding from the Kansas Comprehensive Grant Program. (Attachment 4)

Senator Teichman responded to questions from the Committee relating to both the college and **SB 305**. Senator Vratil asked if she would consider an amendment to the bill providing for a three-year sunset so that the college’s accreditation status could once again be subject to legislative review. Senator Teichman suggested that the sunset be longer. She noted that there was a complimentary bill in the House of Representatives, and the subcommittee planned to recommend a five-year sunset.

Senator Schodorf called the Committee’s attention to written testimony in opposition to **SB 305** submitted by Doug Penner, President, Kansas Independent College Association and Fund, who urged the Committee not to revise eligibility standards as reflected in the bill. She went on to read the four points which Mr. Penner felt was important for the Committee to consider. (Attachment 5)

## CONTINUATION SHEET

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Noting that he had submitted written testimony (Attachment 6), Mr. Robinson commented, “You cannot have an institution offer a college degree, an academic degree in Kansas, unless you have satisfied Board of Regents standards, which are in place pursuant to legislation enacted by the Kansas Legislature. So ideally, it seems to me that eligibility for participation in the Com Grant Program ought to be connected to an institution having achieved status as one of the institutions that can grant degrees in Kansas. From my perspective, the language of the Com Grant statute should say among other things that are in the legislation, rather than listing a specific kind of accreditation that an institution has to have, it ought to say that the institution ought to be one that’s authorized by the Kansas Board of Regents pursuant to the appropriate statutes to grant academic degrees in the state. The problem with that approach in this context is that there are a number that have the authority to grant degrees in the state that never had to go through that process. When the legislation was enacted that gave the Kansas Board of Regents the authority, a number of institutions already operating in the state were grandfathered in. All of those institutions except one has North Central accreditation so it doesn’t become sort of an issue except as it relates to Barclay. Barclay is among those institutions that was grandfathered in and excepted from the process relating to the authority of the Board of Regents to say who can grant postsecondary degrees in the state. And so it seems to me, given that set of realities and assuming that there’s interest in ensuring that Barclay students are able to take advantage of the Com Grant Program, there are three specific alternatives that could be pursued. The first is legislation could be adopted that would not refer to a specific accrediting body but would look at the language of the current Com Grant statute and just put Barclay college in there. A second approach would be to delete from the statute all references to specific accrediting bodies and do what I suggested. That is to say, if you are an institution that has the authority to grant postsecondary degrees in Kansas, your students are eligible to receive Com Grant dollars. That provision, though it doesn’t specifically list Barclay, would pick Barclay up because they were grandfathered in under the statute and they have the authority to issue degrees in the state. The third alternative, which I think is the least favorable, would be to add another accrediting entity to the current statute. I think, as a matter of policy, it makes sense, for an institution that has the authority to grant degrees in the state, their students ought to be eligible for Com Grant.”

There being no others wishing to testify, the hearing on **SB 305** was closed.

Senator Schodorf asked if the Committee wished to take action on a previously heard bill, **SB 436** concerning personnel evaluations for community colleges and school districts.

Senator Vratil moved to amend **SB 436** as suggested by the general counsel for the Board of Regents on page 3, New Section 5, lines 32 and 33, by striking the words “as filed with the state board in accordance with section 4, and amendments thereto;” on page 3, line 42, by striking the phrase “the state board of regents;” and on page 4 by striking all of New Section 7 (lines 3 through 5).

Senator Schodorf explained that the amendments would delete any reference to the State Board of Regents. Senator Vratil commented, “Since **SB 345**, the Regents have attempted to avoid involving themselves in governance issues in connection with community colleges, which I think was the intent of **345**, and I applaud the Board of Regents for doing that. We don’t want to muddy the waters by slipping them back into governance matters.”

Senator Teichmant seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Senator Vratil moved to recommend **SB 436** favorably for passage as amended, seconded by Senator Goodwin. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 15, 2006.

CONTINUATION SHEET

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