



## Arkansas City Public Schools

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February 15, 2017

Members of the House Committee on Taxation:

I strongly support HB 2341 adding Cowley County as a Rural Opportunity Zone (ROZ). Our local schools (USD 470-Arkansas City) have seen significant increases in student enrollment-mostly due to manufacturing and industry. We consistently finish in the top ten per cent of Kansas Counties-but have not the local wealth factors or structured incentives to keep pace with increasing demands. Therefore, we see HB 2341 as a vehicle benefitting not only business and industry-but also the wellness and functionality of our local population-who must have such health, service and educational benefits for us to attract and retain over the long term.

As our school district continues to work with Cowley First, Cowley College and our local businesses, it is expected that we will continue to work in a team effort, bringing well-educated and highly-prepared professionals into the workplace. This can only be done if we have the foundations of HB 2341-assuring a competitive and future-oriented living opportunity for today's (and tomorrow's) life-long learners. I respectfully request your support to make this happen.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ron E. Ballard  
Superintendent of Schools

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