



COWLEY COLLEGE

Date: January 29, 2020
To: Chairman Tarwater and Members of the House Commerce Committee
From: Jessica Lucas, Cowley College Government Affairs Liaison
Re: Support of HB 2515

Cowley College is excited about the opportunities the Kansas Promise Scholarship Act presents for prospective students in our service area. The bill's origin was born from the sponsors' vision that "Kansas needs a plan that marries the 'can-do' spirit of our people with the 'must-have' skills of today's workforce."

Throughout its 98-year history, Cowley College has always been a "can-do" institution. We're proud of our work to match our area's workforce needs with skilled employees we're training at Cowley College and appreciate the recognition by the bill's sponsors that additional financial tools would aid our efforts. Our college, and our peer institutions across the state, are all working on training and educating a skilled workforce who will hopefully find their employment with a Kansas-based company. Yet, there is a cost involved to achieve advanced credentials and education. Our region has many families who make too much to qualify their children for Federal Pell Grant support, but these families don't make enough to afford the costs associated with higher education.

The Kansas Promise Scholarship Act is a tool to aid the lower-middle-class families that community colleges want to serve but for whom the cost can often be a barrier to access education, the most reliable means to increase an individual's lifetime earning power.

We look forward to working with the legislature, Board of Regents, industry partners, and other stakeholders to advance the Kansas Promise Scholarship Act with careful attention to the selection of eligible program areas. Kansas is a varied state, and our regions depend on different talent sectors to meet the needs of area businesses. To keep Kansas growing in our region, it's crucial this program supports our students in careers that are in high demand for the south-central area.