

**Written Testimony of Christopher Stanyer to the Senate Commerce Committee on behalf of Goodwill Industries, the NexStep Alliance Adult education program, and the Kansas Adult Education Association.**

**02-20-2019**

I would like to offer full support of this bill as it is an effective way to utilize existing Kansas programs and infrastructure to meet growing employer demand for a qualified technical workforce. NexStep Alliance serves over 500 GED and ESL students annually. The current Accelerated Opportunity system asks our students to take both technical education courses and GED/ESL courses simultaneously. This means our adult students have two choices: Either complete the GED exam and earn a high school diploma before attending college, or taking both together as through A-OK.

Adult Education is an add-on to the majority of our student's very busy lives. We ask students to commit to three hours of class per day, at least four days per week. This is in addition to the schedule that is, like most of us, busy with family, school functions, work, and public assistance. These individuals simply do not have the time available to manage it all, especially over a long period of time. Asking students to take three hours of GED/ESL classes and at least three hours of college level classes in a single day while still going to work or arranging for a ride leads to discouragement, burnout, and failure. The result is often the same when a student is faced with (in many cases) a year of GED classes then another year of college.

The proposed bill SB199 allows these same students the opportunity to be trained more quickly, more effectively, and within their available window of opportunity. I strongly believe that it will increase the quantity of our Kansas technically trained workforce and move us toward meeting the need of a growing labor shortage in Kansas, all while using existing tools that have simply been realigned.

The Kansas Board of Regents, Goodwill Industries of Kansas, the Wichita Chamber of Commerce, WSU Tech, the Wichita Independent Business Association, and the Kansas Association of Adult Education have all expressed support for this bill. We want employer to have access to the trained workforce they require for success, and we want our Kansas Workforce to have a mechanism available that can put them into that job as quickly as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony in support of SB199.

*Christopher Stanyer*

Vice President of Career Services – Goodwill of Kansas  
Director – NexStep Alliance  
President – Kansas Adult Education Association  
Council member – Towanda, Kansas City Council