



To: Chairman Patton, Ranking Member Carmichael, and the House Judiciary Committee

Date: 5/13/2020

From: Heather Morgan, Executive Director Kansas Association of Community College Trustees

Kansas Community College Testimony in Support of Inclusion in Liability Protection Bill

Thank you for the opportunity today to testify in support of the proposed language related to liability protection due to Covid-19. The Kansas Association of Community College Trustees strongly urges the inclusion of Kansas Community Colleges into this bill. Kansas Community Colleges have adapted and persevered to provide quality education both online and face-to-face during this period. Technical education classes for essential worker occupations continued on many campuses throughout the stay-at-home period in groups of under 10 students and using social distancing, good hygiene, and other best practices to keep students and faculty safe. Additionally, Kansas Community Colleges have transformed some of their fabrication labs into personal protective equipment (PPE) production facilities to produce masks, face shields, and “ear savers” to aid first responders. Kansas Community Colleges also provided on loan, 20+ ventilators to the Kansas Emergency Operations Center (KDEM) for distribution to health care facilities across the state. At the request of the Kansas Department of Insurance Community Colleges also opened their training facilities to aid in the licensure testing for insurance agents across the state to ensure the essential function of insurance was not impeded because of lack of testing facilities. Multiple Kansas Community Colleges also are partnering with KDEM and KDHE to provide housing and food service for first responders, Covid-19 victims, and their families who need housing and food during this emergency.

As one can see, Kansas Community Colleges have gone significantly outside the scope of normal operations to aid their communities and the state of Kansas while continuing to provide the vital education and workforce training needed by Kansas companies. However, these activities occurred in an environment that was anything but usual. Stepping forward to help with housing, food, training, PPE, and equipment could all expose the colleges to liability. Despite tremendous efforts to ensure safe practices, safe production, and extensive plans to ensure the health and safety of all involved colleges are concerned about potential exposure and liability that could incur from doing the right thing and assisting Kansas communities.

Please include Kansas Community Colleges in this bill to ensure they are provided with liability protection during this difficult time for the provision of all of these things mentioned in this testimony as we stand ready to continue serving our students, communities, and the state of Kansas to aid in the emergency medical response during this period of state and national emergency.

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