

STATE OF KANSAS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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**STEVEN K. HOWE**  
DISTRICT 71

March 16, 2022

Dear Chairman Waymaster and members of the committee,

Workforce challenges are widespread across Kansas including those working in the teaching profession. In the fall of 2020, there were 771 teacher vacancies, and in the fall of 2021, there were 1,253 teacher vacancies – an increase of 63 percent! Addressing this workforce challenge will take a comprehensive approach. One of the tools in our toolbox is the Kansas Teacher Service Scholarship program. According to the Kansas Board of Regents in the 2019-2020 academic year, 56 percent of the 832 applicants for this scholarship program received an average award of \$3,836.00. If more funding was available for this program, we could potentially serve even more teachers needing assistance.

As a cosponsor of HB 2626, I am offering this written testimony to support the provisions of this bill which would increase the annual appropriation for the Kansas Teacher Service Scholarship program. This scholarship program was enacted to support the need for licensed and fully endorsed teachers in the hard-to-fill disciplines and underserved geographic areas in the State of Kansas. Under the leadership of the Kansas Board of Regents, this scholarship program has become a trusted and sought-after scholarship program for many teachers in our state. Please consider making this program an even higher priority for the upcoming fiscal years. Together, we can ensure even more teachers can benefit from these valuable scholarship funds while working to address our workforce challenges.

Thank you for your consideration of this appropriation request and thank you for your service to Kansas.

Sincerely,

Steven K. Howe  
State Representative, District 71  
Kansas House of Representatives