



Senate Committee on Education

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 32- Concurrent Enrollment Opportunities

Presented by Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Madam Chair and members of the committee, my name is Eric Stafford, Vice President of Government Affairs for the Kansas Chamber. The Kansas Chamber appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 32, allowing schools to pay tuition for qualifying high school students to attend a postsecondary educational institution.

Each year we survey the Kansas business community to gain an understanding on what issues are a priority or concern for them. We ask respondents how satisfied they are with the workforce in Kansas. This year, as in year's past, employers are mostly satisfied with the workforce in the state but would like to see improvement in soft skills and technical skills from their employees.

We believe Senate Bill 32 makes a great step toward getting our future workforce career ready by allowing them to obtain credits as students consider a two-year, four-year, or technical degree career path. No matter what path they take, some college credit will be required. Improving access to those credits early on is a win for the student and their family, as well as for the employer community. We greatly appreciate the collaboration with the Department of Education, the Board of Regents, and Dr. Cynthia Lane, Co-Chair of the Governor's Education Council on this policy and others addressing our future workforce.

In closing, we believe Senate Bill 32 is a positive step for both students and employers and we would respectfully ask for your support. I'm happy to answer any questions you might have at the appropriate time.