



**“The Chamber of Commerce for the Kansas
Construction Industry”**

**HB 2287 Written Proponent Testimony
Senate Education
Mike Gibson
March 23, 2021**

Mr. Chair and members of the committee, my name is Mike Gibson, Executive Vice President for Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Kansas and recognized as the “Chamber of Commerce for the Kansas Construction Industry.” AGC of Kansas represents over 300 Kansas construction firms and their 9,000 employees. We support HB 2287 because it begins to solve both a technical education and a residency need.

With Kansas currently being ranked 48th in the U.S. for out-migration of population, one of the main reasons for this is that our younger generation is unaware of the many industries in Kansas and if these young women/men do know of an industry they are not aware of how to apply for these professional careers. We believe HB 2287 can be used as a tool to encourage decisions of many of our young to not just get educated, but to also find a place in the Kansas economy.

Volunteering in our communities, maintaining a GPA of 2.0, and either working in Kansas for 2 years or enrolling in additional education is something that is reasonable, innovative and we need to encourage the legislature to continue thinking in these ways.

Our industry doesn’t stand on the sidelines encouraging the legislature to solve our workforce needs. We have spent million building the largest private sector educational partnership in Kansas and are in over 125 High-School, Community College and Vo-Tech partners utilizing AGC’s NCCER craft training materials. Additionally, we have currently launched **“Build Up Kansas”** – www.buildupks.com to speak to our youth were they are are looking – social media. Build up Kansas Targets 17-22 year old women/men and their parents and informs them of the opportunities currently in Kansas.

In closing, Kansas is well positioned to secure future Fortune 500 industries locating to our great state in that we have an abundance of land, a good business environment but we still have work to do in creating a regional approach to workforce training.