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MEMORANDUM

To: Senate Committee on Education
From: Kansas Office of Revisor of Statutes
Date: March 18, 2024
Subject: SB 544—Kansas Academic Excellence Scholarship Program

Senate Bill 544 would replace the existing Kansas ethnic minority scholarship program with the Kansas academic excellence scholarship program.

Currently, Kansas law provides for a Kansas ethnic minority scholarship program that provides financial assistance to students who are Kansas residents, have financial need, demonstrate academic ability and identify as members of any of the following racial or ethnic groups: African American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander or Hispanic.

The scholarship award is subject to appropriations and may be in an amount not to exceed 75% of the average amount of total tuition and required fees for full-time in state students. The scholarship is for up to eight semesters with an additional two semesters if the recipient's program requires a fifth year of study. The award can be renewed if the recipient maintains full-time enrollment at an eligible institution, remains in good standing and makes satisfactory progress toward the completion of their degree or certificate. The scholarship program requires the state board of regents to adopt rules and regulations for administering the program.

SB 544 would change the name and eligibility requirements for the scholarship program. The program would be named the Kansas academic excellence scholarship program. To receive the scholarship, recipients would have to be a Kansas resident, have financial need and demonstrate academic ability.

SB 544 would take effect upon publication in the Kansas Register.