



## KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS

### HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

February 8, 2012

#### Testimony in Support of House Bill 2620-Technical Education Andy Tompkins, President and CEO

Chairman Aurand and members of the Committee, thanks for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you today in support of House Bill 2620 on technical education. We see this initiative as way to incent schools and high school juniors and seniors to consider pursuit of a technical education certificate or credential that could lead directly to a job that supports the Kansas economy. Additionally, we see this as an opportunity to highlight the importance of career and technical education to the future of our students and our economy.

The strategic agenda of the Board of Regents, Foresight 2020, is predicated on increasing the number of Kansans with a postsecondary certificate, credential, associate degree, or bachelor degree. At the current time, approximately 41 percent of Kansans have an associate degree or higher. Numerous studies completed in the past few years have noted that the nation needs to pursue a goal of at least 60 percent of our population with a certificate, credential, associate degree, or bachelor degree. In fact, a recent study completed by Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce entitled *Help Wanted: Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018* indicates that Kansas will need 64 percent of its population with this level of education by 2018 in order to meet the workforce needs of the state.

One of the strategies included in Foresight 2020 is to increase the participation of Kansans in postsecondary education. This technical education initiative clearly aligns with this strategy. Currently, over 13,400 high school students take college coursework that helps them meet some of the general education requirements at our colleges and universities. However, less than 4,000 high school students take courses in a postsecondary technical education program. When you consider that in any given year the total number of juniors and seniors in high school is over 60,000, it is obvious that there is great potential to increase the number of students that could be served through such an initiative.

Obviously, with any change such as is proposed in this bill, there will be many questions about implementation. We have put together a task force comprised of Ken Willard-member of the Kansas State Board of Education, Kenny Wilk-member of the Kansas Board of Regents, and Kathy Howell-chair of the Technical Education Authority who will be assisted by Dr. Tom Foster of the KSDE staff and Dr. Blake Flanders of the KBOR staff. They will begin meeting this Friday to consider issues from those affected by this proposal and to identify solutions. This past week, Dr. Flanders and I met with a representative group of superintendents and high school principals from across the state to discuss statewide articulation between high school and postsecondary. During that meeting, the major issues that surfaced regarding this initiative were

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1) the 30 mile provision, 2) the need for clarity on the duplication provision, and 3) confusion on whether state aid to high schools for career and technical education would be lost or diminished. We believe that these and other issues which will arise can be satisfactorily addressed through the cooperation of KSBE/KSDE, KBOR, TEA, and the field.

One additional issue that we would bring to your attention is found in section 12 (c). This provision would allow community colleges to be excluded from following the statute as it relates to the counties where universities are located. The Board of Regents passed a resolution last month to focus their attention next year on the issue of geographic jurisdictions and service areas. Over the next several months, we will be seeking input from all of the postsecondary institutions that we either govern or coordinate to assist the Board in determining which changes might be needed. It would be our recommendation that you delete this part of section 12 and allow us to study this issue and report to you when we are finished with our study.

We believe that this proposal will increase the number of high school juniors and seniors who pursue a postsecondary certificate or credential. We also believe that this will increase the collaboration between secondary and postsecondary education, another goal of the Kansas Board of Regents. Finally, we believe that this holds the potential to change our perceptions about the importance of career and technical education both to the individual and to our state. We are excited about the potential that this offers to our students, their families, and the state.