



February 7, 2012

Senator Schodorf and members of the Committee thank you for allowing me to testify today on this important matter for Career and Technical Education. My name is Rob Edleston and I am appearing here today in my capacity as the President of the Kansas Association of Technical Colleges. My day job is President of Manhattan Technical College. I am here to speak to those sections of Senate bill 361 that pertain to the delivery of Technical Education.

KATC supports the provisions of Senate bill 361 that provide for a more integrated and seamless system of career and technical education beginning in secondary schools and moving to postsecondary completion and credentialing in many instances. With less than 1000 students concurrently enrolled in postsecondary programs in 2010 the need for SB 361 is clear.

Career exploration and development of student's interest in career and technical education at the secondary level can be capitalized on for the benefit of Kansas by removing barriers through statewide articulation for college credit earned during concurrent enrollment in technical education courses. Aiding and assisting the secondary schools and their students with tuition and the incentive to the home district when a student receives an industry recognized credential or certificate can convert more of these students into a prepared workforce.

An industry recognized certificate, coupled with college credits that transfer easily, will afford our students the opportunity to continue their lifelong learning through these stackable degrees and credits, while being gainfully employed. This measure will open the door of opportunity for many Kansans to a system that has at best been difficult to navigate.

A well trained and highly skilled Kansas workforce is essential to the continued wellbeing of our state and is reflective of our Kansas work ethic that is such an essential underpinning of our way of life. Senate bill 361 not only aids us all in pursuing success for Kansas, but also makes it possible for students seeking further education and training after high school to do so with less dependence on student loans. Starting life with relevant real world education and training, without a mountain of student loan debt, is a real possibility for Kansas students choosing this path.

Thank you for considering this measure as it pertains to career and technical education in Kansas as it allows us to move Kansas from 50th out of 50 States to a more respectable position in this Country.

Robert J. Edleston, Ed.D.
President