

House Committee on Veterans, Military and Homeland Security
February 16th, 2016

Chairman Goico and members of the committee,

I would like to take a few minutes of your time to offer testimony on the recent change in legislation that affected my family just after returning to Kansas after a 21 year career in the Marine Corps. Specifically, HB 2154 which was enacted July 1 2015, just before I enrolled my daughter at the University of Kansas. My wife and I were born and raised in Kansas. We both remained in Kansas until I moved to Quantico VA for Basic training in 1993 after completing my undergraduate degree from the University of Kansas. My Marine Corps career took me to 6 continents and over 20 countries but we were never stationed in Kansas due to the lack of Marine Corps bases in Kansas.

My wife and I knew when I retired on Nov 1st 2014 we were to return to Kansas, but we waited 6 month after I retired to return due to we wanted our daughter to graduate from the only high school she had attended. She graduated at the end of May 2015 and we moved in to our home in Lawrence KS on June 5th 2015 so we could reset our roots in the state and city we know and love, as well as to help care for my wife's aging parents. Unfortunately due to the language in the recent legislative change we were denied In-State tuition for our daughter. We paid out of State tuition for the Fall semester and are expected to pay again for this spring semester. Needless to say, I was shocked that I, as a native Kansan, was not included in HB 2154. The current law, as written, allows non-Kansan veterans who served in Kansas as little as 2 years to receive in-state benefits but not for those who were residents of Kansas prior to joining the military. That seemed, well... wrong to me. I felt it was an oversight in the law, therefore reached out to the Kansas board of Regents to address. I believe the new bill, as proposed, allows all veterans who have ties to Kansas to return to Kansas and not be penalized for serving their country.

Thank you for your time,

Respectfully,
Evan Holt
LtCol U.S.M.C. Retired