

I stand before you today in support of House Bill 2216.

I begin with a general picture of the student loan landscape in the United States. The most recent report from the US Federal Reserve Bank of NY ([www.newyorkfed.org](http://www.newyorkfed.org)) indicates there are:

- 44.7 million Americans with student loan debt
- 1.56 trillion dollars in total US student debt
- 11.5% of student loans are 90 days or more delinquent or are in default
- The average monthly student loan payment (among those not in deferment) is \$393

This bill addresses relief for state employees in Kansas that, for a long time, have been on the short end of the stick. For example: Fears about the security of their retirement benefits, little if any pay raises over the years and increases in health care costs.

This bill will provide an incentive for existing state employees and may well enhance the pool of new employees.

This bill will help lighten the crushing weight student loan repayment places on state employees and their families, because making that monthly loan payment carves a big chunk out of their household budget.

Let's work together to make this happen for our state employees.