



PROPONENT Testimony on HB 2118
For the Senate Assessment & Taxation Committee
March 10, 2020
Matt Lindsey
President, Kansas Independent College Association

Testimony:

Chair Tyson and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony related to House Bill 2118. Several of Kansas' independent colleges and universities offer academic programs directly related to the aviation industry. Thus they, and their students and industry partners, would benefit substantially from the programs conceived in the bill.

Kansas' Independent Colleges:

KICA represents the twenty independent colleges of Kansas, all of which are not-for-profit institutions of higher education, all of which offer undergraduate degrees, all of which have their principal campus in Kansas, all of whom are regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, and all of whom maintain an open enrollment policy consistent with Kansas statutes.

The state of Kansas, via the Kansas Board of Regents, has specific obligations governing "private and out-of-state" educational institutions, per the Private and Out-of-State Post-Secondary Educational Institutions Act. All nineteen KICA institutions are exempt from that statute. Thus, for the independent members of KICA, KBOR has no governing role (as it does for the six 4-year Regents universities), coordinating role (as it does for the community colleges, technical colleges, and Washburn University) nor regulatory role (as it does for any for-profit college or college based outside of Kansas that wishes to operate here).

KICA and Aviation:

Among the twenty non-profit, independent colleges and universities in Kansas, several have aviation-related degree programs. Two of our members are particularly engaged in this field. Hesston College, in Hesston, KS, has a long-standing three-year degree program for professional pilots and a two-year degree program for air traffic control professionals. Central Christian College of Kansas, in McPherson, KS, has a three-year degree program for pilots and a growing certificate program in UAV operation. In both cases, these programs are seeing increased interest from student and corporate partners. Moreover, a number of other KICA institutions have academic programs with pipelines into Kansas' vibrant aviation industry firms supporting their important role in Kansas' economy.

We have long supported the use of any tools at our disposal to encourage post-secondary attainment that fits the needs of Kansas employers, especially those that ensure a timely partnership between our colleges and employers that requires both of us to have "skin in the game." HB 2118 appears to provide another such tool, and as such, we support its passage.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I would be pleased to respond further upon request to any questions you might have regarding independent colleges' role in educating those in the aviation and aeronautical fields.