



**NEUTRAL Testimony on SB 284
For the Senate Education Committee
February 3, 2020**

**Matt Lindsey
President, Kansas Independent College Association**

Chair Baumgardner and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide written neutral testimony related to Senate Bill 284.

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 twenty 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). Furthermore, KICA institutions do not receive any direct institution funding from the state of Kansas, as befits our independent status.

Response to SB 284:

KICA agrees with the intent of SB 284. However we request that the bill be amended to include language allowing institutions of higher education – including non-profit institutions such as ours – to request and receive permanent placards as well, for the same purpose of transporting students who otherwise qualify for a disability placard or license plate.

Approximately 3.4% of our main campus student population identify as having some form of physical disability or impairment – approximately 480 students. While we do not track what portion of those students would specifically meet the state’s standards to qualify for an individual disability license plate or placard, we feel confident in asserting that a substantial portion would so qualify.

Thus, we request that our institutions be granted a similar permission as is envisioned by the bill for K-12 entities. We suggest a change to Section 1(g) to read as follows:

(g) The director of vehicles shall issue a permanent placard to any school district, interlocal cooperative, postsecondary education institution (as defined in K.S.A. 74-3201b) or is a not-for-profit postsecondary education institution exempt from approval of the state of regents under K.S.A. 74-32,164 and amendments thereto, upon application to the director. Such placard shall only be used when transporting a student who otherwise qualifies pursuant to this section for a placard or license plate.

I am happy to appear at a future date and answer questions from the committee if needed. Thank you for your efforts.