

To: House Committee on Higher Education Budget

From: Georgia Blackwood, an enrolled member of the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas and a Lawrence, Kansas Resident

Date: January 22, 2020

Re: HB 2443- Resident tuition rates for certain Native American students at public postsecondary educational institutions

Good morning Chairman Ken Rahje and Members of the Committee. I appreciate the opportunity to present written testimony in support of HB-2443. My name is Georgia Blackwood and I'm also a lifelong resident of Lawrence, Kansas. I am an enrolled member of the Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas.

I'm here today to support the passage of resident tuition rates for American Indians who are current members or citizens of one of the four federally recognized tribes currently residing in the State of Kansas, but who do not currently live within the State of Kansas boundaries.

Kansas will celebrate its 169th year of statehood on January 29 of this year. Meaning, Kansas became a state on January 29, 1861. The Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas has been in its present area since the 1832 Treaty of Castor Hill where the Kickapoo lived near the Missouri River. The Treaty of 1854 with the Kickapoo Tribe ceded over 600,000 acres of land to the U.S. Government.

My tribe has nearly over 1,600 tribal members. Many of *us* have left the reservation in pursuit of education and jobs. The word Kickapoo comes from the original word *Kiikaapoa* meaning "he moves about, standing now here, now there."

Our tribal enrollment numbers are low. Just because we leave the boundaries of the Kickapoo Reservation and State of Kansas should not prohibit me or my fellow tribal members from receiving resident tuition rates.

The Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas was here years before Kansas became a state and we are still here now. We should be allowed to receive resident tuition rates because we are citizens of a nation which is within the borders of Kansas.

Thank you. *Miigwetch.*