



March 22, 2021

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce's support for HB 2287. HB 2287 creates the Kansas Promise Scholarship Act for students studying for in-demand career fields in the vocational sector within one year of completing their high school graduation or equivalency.

This bill serves as a critical tool in meeting the needs of businesses in our region. We need more skilled workers with the training and expertise expected of employees in the advanced manufacturing, building trades, IT, and healthcare sectors. By equipping students with additional resources to complete their education and receive training for in-demand, higher-paying career opportunities, we enhance our ability to recruit and retain a strong workforce.

Our Chamber members have identified workforce development and education as a key priority to fostering greater prosperity and growth. This bill provides one of many solutions we believe necessary to building tomorrow's workforce in the region.

Several years ago, this body adopted SB 155, extending technical education to students while in high school. It's been a resounding success. This bill builds on SB 155's success and makes affording a technical education an option for more young Kansans. Thank you for considering HB 2287. We urge its adoption.

Respectfully,

Jason Watkins
Wichita Regional Chamber of Commerce