

Testimony on **HB 2367**
before the
House Federal and State Affairs
by
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Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear today on behalf of the Kansas Association of School Boards and the Kansas National Education Association and testify in opposition to **HB 2367**.

KASB staff members have appeared on at least two prior occasions concerning postsecondary education issues pertaining to undocumented immigrants. KASB supported the concept that established criteria for determining students' eligibility for in-state tuition and fees at Kansas postsecondary educational institutions. KASB opposed HB 2615 that attempted to prohibit undocumented immigrants from pursuing their postsecondary education in Kansas by removing eligibility for in-state tuition and fees.

KASB continues to support every opportunity for students to pursue their education regardless of their immigration status. **HB 2367** will remove the possibility of students currently attending K-12 schools from continuing their education at the postsecondary level. Students with dreams of continuing their education beyond K-12 in Kansas should be encouraged, not stymied. KASB believes that Kansas' economic future and the continued growth of our citizens depends on an education system that is not only well rounded but also never-ending.

This bill would harm not only those students currently attending a Kansas postsecondary institution, but also those students that are currently enrolled in the Kansas K-12 system. To summarily deprive them of an opportunity to continue their education seems harsh at best and counter-productive to an improved citizenry and a more economically viable state.

According to reports from the Board of Regents, the provisions passed by the Legislature in the 2004 session (K.S.A. 76-731a) have made it possible for 169 undocumented students to attend a Kansas Regents institution, a community college or a technical college or school at an in-state tuition rate in 2006. During their continued schooling, these persons will continue to strengthen their ties to Kansas and become strong citizens and workers necessary for economic growth.

While **HB 2367** has a provision allowing persons to receive public benefits on a temporary basis, if the specified criteria are not met, those benefits are lost and students would not be able to start school in the Fall. Students enrolled in Summer school would be required to stop attending classes and lose the credit, tuition and fees. KASB contends that students who have attended Kansas K-12 institutions should not be precluded from attending Kansas postsecondary institutions notwithstanding their immigration status.

I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today and would be happy to answer questions.