



Senate Education
Opponent Testimony SB 102
Scott J. Schneider JD, Executive Director
February 15th, 2023

Chair and members of the committee, I am Scott Schneider the Executive Director of the newly formed Kansas Business Roundtable. Our organization is focused on five pillars, workforce development, innovation, healthcare, infrastructure and a civil society. We held our first Workforce Summit this last December in Wichita. In attendance were business leaders from across the state. Some of the attendees are leaders you often see in the halls of the Capitol, some you drive by their large business entities on your way about town, others you read about receiving incentives trying to expand their microchip business right here in Kansas.

We heard from Board of Regents President, Blake Flanders, who encouraged us to set aside our Kansas humility. He identified other states who are aggressively resetting their higher educational relationships as they too understand the population shifts are placing more demand for technically qualified citizenry.

Of special interest was a presentation from Mr. Louis Rodriguez of Key Centrix and Keith Lawing on an innovative registered apprentice program they have established to hire and then train an expanded number of information technology specialists specifically for the banking industry.

Simply put, people are trying to do anything they can think of to bring more people to Kansas to work. We oppose SB 102 because it does the opposite. This bill send the wrong message at the wrong time. These decisions should be left with the organizations themselves or in the case of others, their governing bodies should be in a position to decide.

Many of our participants concluded three things; 1) Kansas is behind the demographic curve¹, 2) simply softening the edges of policy is unlikely to produce the more dramatic results needed, and 3) business needs are unique and Kansas should pursue an “all of the above” policy when considering workforce development changes.

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- The population of Kansas in 2022 was **2,937,150**, a **0.03% decline** from 2021
 - The population of Kansas in 2021 was **2,937,922**, a **0% increase** from 2020.
 - The population of Kansas in 2020 was **2,937,919**, a **0.87% increase** from 2019.
 - The population of Kansas in 2019 was **2,912,635**, a **0% increase** from 2018.