

State of Kansas



Speaker Mike O'Neal
Kansas House of Representatives

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR 5018
MARCH 10, 2011

Chairman Aurand and members of the Committee, I appear today in support of HCR 5018, a proposition to amend the Kansas Constitution to reform our system of public education in Kansas. In an environment of limited resources, the critical need for updating of our educational mission and providing a seamless system of K-20 educational opportunity the time has come to seriously consider reforming our system of education governance.

HCR 5018 would revise Article 6 of the Kansas Constitution to move our system of governance to one where Education achieves cabinet level status and a Secretary of Education oversees the governance of both K-12 and post-secondary education in the State.

Education reform efforts have stagnated under the current system. K-12 and Regents openly compete for funds, post secondary institutions have duplicative programs, K-12 graduates students unprepared for college and colleges must provide remedial programs for unprepared students. There is a perception if not fact that there is little coordination between K-12 and regents.

It is time for public debate on the future of our educational interests in the state. The status quo is no longer acceptable. We can't afford it and it is not maximizing the educational experience for our students. Only a handful of states choose to govern education the way we do. Most have chosen other models and half have recognized education as a cabinet level position in the executive branch.