



Chairman Baumgardner and Senators:

Please refer to bill page 4 lines 8-13 regarding eligibility for Kansas hero's scholarship act. The comments refer to military service members and do not count other eligibility as public safety officers.

I do not have data on the number of former prisoners of war in Kansas but I would be surprised if the number exceeded 100 individuals.

Regarding bill page 4, subparagraph (ii) lines 10 and 11, these individuals are found unfit for duty under Title 10 United States Code Chapter 61 procedures due to injuries or illness incurred on active service in the military. Their federal disabilities are granted by their service secretary (e.g. Secretary of the Army for soldiers) and not the Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Such individuals are medically retired from active military service. Their family members should be considered eligible for HB 2646 scholarships. I do not have an estimate from a DoD-source on the number of Kansas residents medically retired from active service. Furthermore, some of these individuals may elect to receive VA disability compensation based on their medical retirement and these individuals may be counted in the cohort below.

Regarding page 4 subparagraph (iii) lines 12 and 13, there is a reasonable estimate of the number of Kansans rated 80 per cent or more: about **20,289** veterans are rated 80% or more based on VA data as of September 30, 2023. This is a count of the veterans and not a count of the spouses and dependent children of such veterans. Also, recall that some of the cohort of 20,289 are counted eligible under both (ii) and (iii) of the language on page 4 lines 8-13. The VA data source for the estimate of 20,289 is the Veterans Benefits Administration Annual Benefits Report (ABR) Fiscal Year 2023. Release date of the ABR was February 14, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Kelly  
State Legislative Chair  
Kansas Council of Chapters