Subject: Kansas Must Reject the Trump Administration's Attempt to Politicize Higher Education

Dear Members of the Kansas Board of Regents,

We, the undersigned representatives of faculty senates and faculty unions at Kansas public universities, call on the Kansas Board of Regents and the universities it governs to categorically reject the Trump administration's National Call to Action on Higher Education and refuse to participate in its implementation.

The federal administration is using its authority and leverage over higher education to advance a political agenda and pressure universities to conform to its preferred ideological priorities. This threatens academic freedom, shared governance, and the independence essential to our public institutions. Academic freedom protects the ability of faculty to teach, conduct research, and pursue knowledge without political interference, while shared governance ensures that academic decisions are informed by faculty expertise and meaningful participation.

Universities exist to educate students, advance knowledge, and serve the public good. They cannot fulfill these responsibilities if their academic priorities are dictated by political demands. The federal government may enforce the law and administer programs authorized by Congress, but it must not use funding decisions, investigations, or regulatory consequences to dictate the intellectual direction of universities or secure ideological compliance.

Participation in the National Call to Action risks legitimizing an initiative that expands political influence over academic institutions. Kansas should not help normalize a system in which universities must demonstrate alignment with the federal administration to protect access to public resources.

We call on the Kansas Board of Regents and Kansas public universities to:

- **Categorically reject the National Call to Action and decline to participate in the reporting process.** Kansas public higher education should not legitimize an initiative that threatens its independence.
- **Defend academic freedom and shared governance.** Decisions about curriculum, research, academic programs, and faculty responsibilities must be grounded in scholarly expertise and educational purpose, with meaningful faculty participation through established shared governance processes, not political directives. Faculty must remain free to teach, research, and engage in scholarly inquiry without political interference or coercion.
- **Reject federal political coercion.** The Board and its institutions should insist that responding or declining to respond have no bearing on federal financial aid, grants, contracts, investigations, enforcement decisions, or other government actions.
- **Stand together in defense of institutional independence.** The Board must provide clear leadership in protecting Kansas public universities from political interference and ensure that no institution is pressured to compromise its academic independence in pursuit of federal favor.

This is not a question of whether universities should be accountable to the public. It is a question of whether they will remain independent institutions serving their students and communities or become increasingly subject to political demands. The Board has a

responsibility to defend that independence, and refusing to participate in this initiative is an essential demonstration of that commitment.

We urge the Kansas Board of Regents and the institutions it governs to reject the National Call to Action. Kansas public universities must serve their students, their communities, and the people of this state, not the political agenda of the federal administration.

Sincerely,
Representatives of Faculty Senates and Faculty Unions at Kansas Public Universities