

December 17, 2015

Mr. Patrick J. O'Donnell  
Clerk of the Nebraska Legislature  
Room 2018, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

Dear Mr. Clerk:

This correspondence is intended to fulfill the requirement for the Education Committee to report electronically to the Legislature regarding its findings related to the report required by LB 519, (2015). That bill required the Committee to “conduct a study of postsecondary education affordability in Nebraska and alternatives for supporting students and families with the financial cost.” The Education Committee conducted a public hearing on Thursday, September 10 in Hearing Room 1525. All members of the Education Committee were in attendance.

The hearing featured a presentation by the Coordinating Commission for Post-Secondary Educations Executive Director, Dr. Michael Baumgartner, regarding the Commission’s findings on Post-Secondary Affordability in Nebraska (**See attached document**). The Committee also received testimony from or on behalf of the following Nebraska, post-secondary institutions and systems: Northeast Community College, Southeast Community College, Metropolitan Community College, The University of Nebraska System, The Nebraska State College System and the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Nebraska.

Among the suggestions and recommendations provided to the Committee to assist in making Nebraska post-secondary institutions more affordable were:

- To provide additional general fund appropriations to state institutions in order to keep tuition costs down;
- Increase the amount of funding available under the Nebraska Opportunity Grant, which grant provides needs based assistance to students attending Nebraska Post-Secondary institutions; and

- Increase the amount of funding available under the Access College Early scholarship program, which provides needs based assistance to high school students participating in dual-credit courses.

The Committee recognizes the increasing cost of a post-secondary education across the country and in the State of Nebraska and recommend that the committee continue to work with Nebraska Post-Secondary Institutions to identify ways to contain and reduce the cost of obtaining a post-secondary education for Nebraskans.

Sincerely,

*Kate Sullivan*

Kate Sullivan  
State Senator  
District #41