

**Submitted Comment for Nebraska Appropriations Committee  
LR261 Interim study on state mandated tuition/fees waivers  
Matt Gotschall, College President, Central Community College  
October 31, 2025**

Senator Ibach, Senator Clements, and members of the Appropriations Committee, my name is Matt Gotschall, President of Central Community College, and I have the honor of submitting comments on behalf of Central Community College regarding the fiscal impact of the state mandated tuition and fee waivers. In pulling just the past five years of data, we have seen an increase of over **80%** in lost tuition/fee revenue with a prediction of surpassing that in 2025-26. While positive that eligible participants and their families are increasing taking advantage of these appreciated discounts, it is a significant fiscal impact for a mid-size, rural community college.

To summarize:

First responders eligible under the First Responder Act 85-2609, started in 2022-23 and since then has assisted 33 (duplicate students since eligible for multiple years) at a total cost through fall semester 2025 of \$52,391.

Community college discounts for state employees eligible by 81-1329, started in 2021-22 and has assisted 192 duplicated students at a cost of \$28,489.

Support for dependents of deceased or disabled veterans, spouses and children eligible by 80-411, 85-507 and 85-2301 started prior to 2020-21, but since then has supported 523 duplicate students at a cost of \$443,402.

Members of active select reserves enacted through 80-901 and 85-505 has assisted 15 duplicate students since 2020-21 at a cost of \$5,658.

Although community colleges have rural health programs in essential career areas, we have not been eligible for the rural health opportunity program (71-5684) so have no participants.

**In total, 663 duplicate students have had over \$456,054 in tuition and/or fees waived since 2020-21. All of these numbers will increase this year as awards have not yet been made for January 2026 semester or May 2026 summer term.**

While we do greatly appreciate the value the legislature places on postsecondary education and the impact community colleges can have in assisting these important recipients to prepare for a career providing a livable wage in Nebraska, we are being increasingly impacted financially. Central is expecting lost revenue of over \$150,000 for 2025-26 alone.

Thank you taking time to review this information and consider common support initiatives. I am happy to provide additional information as needed and can be reached at [mgotschall@cccneb.edu](mailto:mgotschall@cccneb.edu) or 308.398.7300.