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House Committee on K-12 Education Budget
Chair, Rep. Kristey Williams
Hearing: February 5, 2024

Opposition Written Testimony for HB 2612 – *Requiring school districts to be in compliance with all state laws and rules and regulations to be accredited and requiring the state board of education to establish a process to challenge determinations of such compliance.*

Chair Williams and Members of the Committee,

Mainstream opposes HB 2612.

The right to a suitable education is guaranteed by the Kansas Constitution for all children regardless of income, ability, race, or any other factor. This guarantee of public education is essential to meeting the academic and career readiness needs of our students, free of discrimination and religious or ideological influences.

HB 2612 circumvents the oversight of education professionals on the state school board and places the future of public schools students in the hand of politicians. What's more, it only places this burden on public education, not private or other non-public schools. This bill holds public schools to an even stricter standard while private schools to continue admission policies that may harm our most vulnerable students.

If, as some legislators have suggested, the public schools are "failing" some students, then it is within the power of the state to fix that. The legislature should work with the Kansas Department of Education and State Board of Education to guarantee that constitutionally suitable public education is available to all Kansas children.

We respectfully urge you to oppose passage of HB 2612.