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Feb. 6, 2023

Written Testimony from Carol Williamson, ksscienceteacher@gmail.com

To: KS House Education Committee % Deborah.Bremer@house.ks.gov

Re: House Bill 2236, KS Legislative Session 2023

Submitted on Monday, Feb. 6 to be presented at the HB 2236 Hearing in the Education Committee on Wed., Feb. 8 at 1:30 pm. I cannot attend the committee hearing at that time so I am submitting written testimony Please note this testimony was submitted more than 48 hours before the hearing.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Williamson

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To: KS House Education Committee % Deborah.Bremer@house.ks.gov

Re: House Bill 2236, KS Legislative Session 2023

I oppose HB 2236 because it interferes with a well-executed format for parents to have input on their child's education and it amounts to legislative interference in the jurisdiction of the Kansas State Board of Education and local school boards.

I am a lifelong Kansan, a parent, grandparent, and a now-retired Kansas teacher of 38 years. My relationship with my students' parents was one of the many things I loved about teaching. We were a team, not adversaries. This bill is about parents having input in their own children's education but parents currently have ample opportunities at many levels. A parent can contact a teacher if there is concerning content. If the parent chooses to, they can exempt their child from concerning content and an alternative assignment will be provided by the teacher. If a parent is not satisfied with the teacher's response, there is a well-documented, well-executed procedure for appealing to the school administration and district administration, and to the local school board.

School curriculum is set in accordance with well-researched practices and standards set by the Kansas State Board of Education, an elected body that has public input at their monthly meetings. Local school boards, also elected, also have public/parent input at their meetings. Most Kansas citizens greatly value and support Kansas public education as shown in the Kansas Speaks 2022 survey done by the Docking Center at Fort Hays State University.

<https://www.fhsu.edu/docking/Kansas-Speaks/2022-kansas-speaks-report-v5.pdf>

An individual parent with a concern about content that is in conflict with their religion or personal morality currently has options for expressing their concerns and acting on their wishes for their student. An individual parent should not use the legislature to do an end-run around duly elected state and local boards of education to change curriculum or content for all students. That would be akin to me saying I should be able to make the laws of Kansas even though we have a duly elected legislature and governor to enact laws. Instead, I vote and I am following the process for public input on legislation by submitting this written testimony. Parents should vote and follow the process for submitting their concerns.

We don't need HB 2236 because parents already have a voice in their children's education. HB 2236 would be harmful public education which is a cornerstone of our democracy.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Williamson

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