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Testimony to the House K-12 Education Budget Committee

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BILL NUMBER: HB 2738

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only

Dear Chair & members of the committee,

I am writing to voice my opposition to bill HB 2738.

Any attempts at changing the current method of calculating the state's share of special education funding should be vetted by experts and stakeholders. This bill creates a completely new way of calculating funding without careful review or thoughtful consideration of its impacts.

It is time for the state to meet its obligation to fund 92% of excess special education costs. School districts, the State Board of Education, and the Kansas Department of Education all recognize that special education hasn't been fully funded since 2011. The shortfall has grown to an estimated \$173 million. The shortfall negatively impacts schools, teachers, and students as they still have to figure out a way to provide these services often by using money from their general education funds to cover the shortfall. Public schools are committed to serving all students and should be adequately funded so they can do just that. As a parent of two students who receive special education services, I implore you to consider the ramifications of this bill.

A Special Education Task Force was created for the purpose of reviewing the current method of funding and determining if any changes are needed. Please vote no on HB 2738 and refer it to the Task Force for further review.

In the meantime, please follow the phase-in plans proposed by the Governor or the State Board of Education to fully fund special education. Our schools will not be fully funded until special education is fully funded.

Jeanne Koontz, Kansas Citizen
Hutchinson