

HB 2136 Opposition Testimony (Written Only)
Senate Education Committee
February 5, 2025
Angie Powers, private citizen

Chair Estes and members of the committee,

Thank you for your work representing Kansas voters in Topeka. I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 2136, based on my experiences as a mother of two Kansas public school graduates and as a public school educator for 25 years.

Our public schools are the cornerstone of Kansas communities, operating under rigorous requirements to serve all students, regardless of background, ability, or circumstance. Unlike private schools, public schools do not pick and choose which students or families they serve. House Bill 2136 would divert public funds away from these schools, weakening their ability to deliver on the promise of a quality public school for every Kansas child.

There is no need to expand the Tax Credit Scholarship program at this time because there are still hundreds of thousands of students still eligible under the current guidelines who are not utilizing the scholarship. I respect every family's right to choose the best educational setting for their children, but public funds should not be diverted to subsidize private schools that are not held to the same rules and accountability as public schools. Furthermore, increasing the credit to 100% and expanding the program will leave fewer spots to at-risk students the program was intended to help. Instead, it allows for tax avoidance for those who already choose to send their children to private schools--schools that can pick and choose who they want to educate.

This bill would be especially harmful to rural communities, where private schools are often rare or online only. Public schools are the backbone of these areas, and reallocating funds to private schools in urban and suburban areas would leave rural schools with fewer resources to serve their students' diverse needs.

As a mom and an educator, I've seen the transformative impact of public schools on both my children and my students. Public schools bring students from all walks of life together to learn, grow, and prepare for the future. They work tirelessly to improve and meet the needs of every child.

If House Bill 2136 passes, it will weaken neighborhood public schools. Public funds belong in public schools, which serve all students. I urge you to oppose this bill and instead support policies that strengthen Kansas public schools, like increasing SPED funding.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely, Angie Powers