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**BILL NUMBER:** HB 2136

**PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL:** Opponent

**ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY:** Written Only

**DATE OF HEARING:** February 5, 2025

Chair Estes & Members of the Committee,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2136. Despite being called a “tax credit,” it’s still a voucher program that will cut revenue to our public schools, causing harm to Kansas public schools and shortchanging the education of our youngest Kansans.

Here are a few reasons why educational “tax credits” or vouchers are bad for Kansas’s public schools.

- **They hurt student achievement.** In states that have implemented a similar program, unaccredited school vouchers hurt student achievement more than the 2020 pandemic (sources below).
- **They undermine public schools.** They divert resources away from public schools, attended by 90% of students, to fund the education of a few select students.
- **Private school tax credits or vouchers do not offer real choice.** Private schools can choose their students. Public schools are bound by law to accept all students.
- **Tax credits or vouchers fail to provide accountability to taxpayers.** Vouchers for private schools do not have appropriate oversight, which is critical when using public tax dollars.

As a parent to two products of Kansas K-12 schools (one is in college and one is a high school senior this year), I can personally speak to the quality of our public education system in preparing students for postsecondary success. Seven years of serving on a public school board has also shown me the amazing work done by our schools on a daily basis. Public schools keep students at the center of their budgetary decisions; why would we want to divert funding from them, making it harder to do their critical work?

Public tax dollars should be used to fund services benefitting **all** citizens. I urge you to vote no on HB 2136.

Jacqueline Lightcap  
Topeka

**Sources:** R. Joseph Waddington & Mark Berends, [Impact of the Indiana Choice Scholarship Program: Achievement Effects for Students in Upper Elementary & Middle School](#), 37 J. of Policy Analysis & Mgmt. 4, 738-808 (Aug. 2018); Atila Abdulkadiroğlu, Parag A. Pathak, & Christopher R. Walters, [Free to Choose: Can School Choice Reduce Student Achievement?](#), 10 Am. Econ. Journal: Applied Econ. 1, 175-206 (Jan. 2018); David Figlio & Krzysztof Karbownik, Inst. (July 2016); U.S. Dep’t of Educ., [Evaluation of Ohio’s EdChoice Scholarship Program: Selection, Competition, & Performance Effects](#), Fordham [Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Impacts Two Years After Students Applied](#) (June 2018).