

Jamie Mast  
Parent  
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Bill HB 2136  
Opponent  
WRITTEN ONLY  
February 5, 2025

Chair Estes & Members of the Committee,

I am writing to voice my opposition to bill number HB 2136. I appreciate your time and willingness to learn about my opposition to bill HB 2136 and hope that my perspective will be helpful in considering what happens with this bill.

I am so proud to have been born and raised in Belleville, KS and educated in public school in that rural setting. I still care fiercely for that community, as well as rural Kansas communities in general, even though I now live in Shawnee. For this reason, I strongly oppose bill HB 2136 because passing this bill would take money and opportunities from the rural communities that make up most of Kansas and redistribute to people who have access to many more opportunities as it is.

Though my four sons, who attend USD 232 De Soto, have plenty of public and private school options available to them in Shawnee, my niece and nephew, who attend USD 109 Republic County, do not. By implementing HB 2136, money and resources would be redistributed to the settings that have private schools available, mainly urban settings, leaving those without these options to pay for it.

More succinctly, my primary concerns with bill HB 2136 are:

- This bill takes money that could be used to strengthen our public schools that serve all kids and gives it to families who have made a private choice to receive a religious or other non-public education, many who can easily afford that choice anyway.
- A strong public education system provides benefits to the entire society, not just the individual students. The potential consequences of diverting public tax dollars to those who choose to homeschool or send their kids to private school undermines the state's ability to fund our public schools, potentially leaving an underfunded public school system.
- There are no controls in place to ensure those receiving these tax credits are providing the children with a quality education or any education at all. Kansans expect accountability for how our tax dollars are being used.
- Rural students (and communities) are harmed as public school resources are drained and students in rural areas lack little to no private options.

In closing, as written, HB 2136 is not fair to all Kansans, and has few safeguards to prevent fraud. Our rural communities desperately need their public schools to survive and thrive, and HB 2136 will very likely have the exact opposite impact on these communities.

Please vote NO on bill HB 2136.

Jamie Mast  
Parent  
Shawnee, KS