

## Testimony to the House Committee on Education

**Name:** Rebecca Cohenour

**Title:** Johnson County resident and parent/grandparent of children in and who graduated from Shawnee Mission USD 512

**Email Address:** spudgirl80@gmail.com

**Bill Number:** Bill 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,

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this issue. I am writing to voice my **opposition** to bill HB 2136.

A well-educated public is essential for a successful society. Vouchers take money from public schools and society will suffer as a result.

Following are just a few of the troubling points in this bill (there are many more):

- There is no guarantee that all schools/entities which receive voucher funding provide a solid education for students. Kansans expect accountability for our tax dollars!
- Private schools clearly benefit from public dollars but can discriminate in their admission policies.
- Rural areas and families without private school options will pretty much be subsidizing families in more densely populated areas of the state. Their public schools suffer from reduced funding.
- Expanding the Tax Credit Scholarship program will divert even more funds that could otherwise be used to improve public education, to subsidize the private choices of some parents and allow donors to avoid paying taxes in Kansas.
- This program already allows for tax avoidance, especially for wealthy donors. Increasing the tax credit to 100% provides special tax treatment to those who choose to donate through this program that funds private schools versus those who donate to other nonprofits.

In closing, I urge you to reject HB 2136. Public dollars belong in public schools that are accountable to taxpayers. Society as a whole will benefit.

Rebecca Cohenour  
Lenexa, Kansas