



KANSAS NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION / 715 SW 10TH AVENUE / TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1686

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Written Testimony – Opponent
House Education Committee
House Bill 2034
January 14, 2026

Chairperson Estes and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony opposing HB 2034.

KNEA strongly supports the health, safety, and welfare of Kansas students. We believe a healthy school environment is essential to students' social-emotional, cognitive, and physical well-being.

Our members have adopted resolutions supporting comprehensive student support services delivered by licensed professionals, including school counselors, social workers, and psychologists who are trained to address student needs, mental health challenges, and crisis situations.

HB 2034 would allow school districts to employ or accept volunteer chaplains to provide “support, services, and programs” for students, while explicitly exempting those individuals from any licensure requirements. KNEA believes these responsibilities already exist within schools and should be provided by trained and licensed professionals. Authorizing unlicensed individuals to perform similar functions is concerning, particularly at a time when student mental health needs are increasing.

KNEA is also concerned that the bill does not clearly require chaplains to be mandatory reporters. **Any individual providing student support in a school setting should be held to the same reporting and accountability standards as other school employees.**

Finally, HB 2034 raises concerns about blurring the line between church and state. Our opposition is not a statement against faith or religion, but a belief that public schools must remain inclusive environments for all students.

For these reasons, KNEA respectfully urges the Committee to oppose HB 2034.

Thank you for your time and consideration.