

February 5, 2026

Bill HB2421 Opponet

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Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to voice my concerns and opposition to Bill HB2421. I understand and agree that cell phone and smart watch use has become a distraction and hinderence for learning in the classroom setting. I feel that districts should have an "off and away" written policy in place requiring students to keep cellphones and/or smart watches in their lockers, cubbies, or backpack. However, I do not agree with components of this Bill as written.

My concern and opposition is regarding three components of the Bill:

1. I oppose including personal earbuds in the bill. Children with anxiety and those with noise sensitivity benefit from being allowed to use ear buds in the classroom. They can still hear their teacher but it cuts out distracting background noise. Ear buds are discreet and do not draw attention to students using them like head phones do. This is important for student self esteem.

2. My second reason for opposing this bill is cost. Expecting school districts to provide "secure" and "inaccessible " storage such as locked phone pouches or phone lockers would be a financial burden

on districts and parents alike. It is unrealistic to believe districts could absorb 100% of these costs within their current fiscal budgets and without State funding. Some cost would have to be handed to parents, many of which are struggling or are on a fixed income. Taking money from a district's fiscal budget, which is already stretched thin, will impact necessary student services. These funds are better utilized to support student education and students with specific needs.

Storing phones will present a logistics challenge, especially for larger schools in each district. Some high school students now attend part time classes off campus. Making them wait to check out their phones before leaving campus would be burdensome to staff and students alike. Students may miss class content on

campus to do so or they may be tardy to off campus classes if staff is unavailable to check them out. This could also be an issue for parents who are picking up a child for an appointment and have to wait.

I encourage the committee to trust District Leaders who know their student population, to create "off and away" policies that best serve their unique community. Mandating each Kansas district to create and implement their own "off and away" policy is a reasonable expectation. Mandating an expensive, inflexible State Bill that does not consider the unique needs of each district and is not state funded is not.

For these reasons, I encourage the committee to vote no on Bill HB2421.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Maschler, Shawnee, Ks

