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Testimony to the Senate Education Committee

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BILL NUMBER: SB 75

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written & oral testimony

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opposition testimony against Senate Bill 75.

As a parent of three children in the Blue Valley District, I have many concerns with bill SB 75.

Public tax dollars belong with our public schools supporting all kids in Kansas. 90% of kids in Kansas attend public schools. The lack of oversight around admission practices to private schools and their lack of accountability for education outcomes seems like tax dollars are being paid by all for the benefit of some. Public schools are expected to meet the needs of all kids in Kansas and public school teachers are doing that. I have three children in Blue Valley schools and they all learn differently and have needed different support and have received that from their teachers. This is why we need to invest in our public schools and not divert funds to private schools.

Studies have shown that students who attend private schools through vouchers do not perform better academically than students who attend public schools. Vouchers also may perpetuate educational inequality. They can benefit more affluent families who are more likely to have the resources to navigate the application process.

Kansas legislators should focus their efforts on strengthening our public school system and not diverting tax dollars to private schools. There is a real opportunity for you to choose to fully fund Special Education which would benefit all students.

Kansas has some of the highest education standards in the nation and outstanding teachers who are challenging our kids with classroom learning that encourages critical thinking and hands on learning. These teachers deserve the commitment and support of our representatives. Your efforts should be to support these teachers and making sure we can continue to hire and keep good teachers for children in public schools. If you pass this bill, you will be putting the funding needed to support our teachers and the majority of Kansas kids at risk by giving tax dollars to schools that don't have the same obligations and have no oversight.

I oppose bill SB 75.

Thank you for your consideration.

Amy Hill

Parent of three children in Blue Valley District

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