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Proponent testimony on Senate Bill 361 Oral Testimony

Foreign Exchange Student Enrollment

Senate Education Committee

February 3, 2026

Thank you for the opportunity to submit oral testimony in support of SB361. This bill would provide proviso language that was included in the Governor's Recommendation compared to Special Committee on State Budget Recommendation FY2026-FY2028 to be accepted on a permanent basis, not require year-to-year approval.

The language allows foreign exchange students who reside with a host family to be permitted to enroll in and attend a school within the host family's home district and that these students shall not be subjected to the open seat lottery.

In Kansas, the open-seat lottery process is used by school districts to randomly select non-resident students for enrollment when applications exceed available spots. This process is required to be completed by July 15 each year, and districts must publish the number of open seats available by June 1.

The issue is that some of these students may not be available, been assigned to homes or have completed paperwork by the June 30th deadline.

If there are questions as to what the present open-seat lottery is I would ask they be directed to the Kansas State Department of Education.

Thanks for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Senator Brad Starnes