



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

Timothy R. Graham
Director of Government Relations & Legislative Affairs
Oral Testimony – Opponent
Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare
Senate Bill 29
February 7, 2025

Chairperson Gossage and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to SB 29.

Kansas NEA is a member-driven organization representing all 40,000 educators in the state of Kansas, including nearly 22,000 active members. The positions we advocate for have been proposed, debated, and adopted by several hundred members selected by their peers to attend our annual Representative Assembly.

The health and safety of educators in the workplace and students in the classroom are top priorities for KNEA.

SB 29 raises serious concerns about workplace and classroom safety for teachers, students, and their families. This bill would represent a significant setback in the fight to eradicate childhood diseases such as measles, mumps, and polio by weakening the authority of the Secretary of Health and Environment to act against the introduction and spread of infectious diseases in Kansas.

The spread of infectious diseases—many of which are listed above—negatively impacts public education more than any other sector, as schools are the most prevalent mass-gathering establishments in our communities.

It is critical to have trusted officials in place to review and implement policies and strategies to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. By repealing the Secretary of Health and Environment's authority to take appropriate measures—such as quarantine and isolation strategies—SB 29 could lead to outbreaks that result in chronic absenteeism, learning loss for Kansas students, and even more severe consequences.

We urge the committee to oppose SB 29.

Thank you for your time.