

Testimony for SB145, Senate Education Committee, Chairperson Molly Baumgardner

February 9, 2017

Members of Kansas Legislature Senate Education Committee:

On behalf of the 798 families and over 6800 graduates of Saint Thomas Aquinas High School, I am writing to urge you to vote not to advance SB 145 out of the Senate Education Committee. It is my understanding that the bill is scheduled for a hearing on Monday, February 13, 2017.

Saint Thomas Aquinas High School cherishes our membership in the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA). Throughout the years we have found that the decisions of the Association have been made with an inordinate amount of due diligence and deliberation, all while using great care to represent and serve the all young people of Kansas high schools involved in extra-curricular activities.

KSHSAA, through its membership and governance structure, has also taken great care in researching and arriving at equitable solutions to the challenges confronting a diverse and far reaching membership. As a member school, we have a great deal of trust in the process followed over and over again by the boards, committees and executive staff of the KSHSAA. Further, we support the Association's position not to oppose this bill and believe it to be wise and prudent.

For a little over a year and a half, a study committee representing the stakeholders of the Association has been working to develop equitable adjustments to the classification structure for an evolving membership. The committee, formed at the request of the membership, has done tremendous work to arrive at solutions to the issues set before it. The members of this committee represent a far reaching constituent group from member schools and have reached out for meaningful and valid feedback from the member schools along the way. Their work is scheduled to be presented this spring following the established KSHSAA protocol agreed to by the members.

In light of the year and a half of work already completed and scheduled to be presented to the member schools, we oppose Senate Bill 145 primarily because it does not allow for the process agreed to by the membership to continue to its natural conclusion. The steady, difficult and valid work of the study committee is being co-opted and effectively rendered moot before being given any consideration by the member schools by this bill.

I urge you to allow the KSHSAA to continue to do its work following its established bylaws as agreed to by the membership and reject SB 145.

Thank you for your consideration.

Dr. William P. Ford  
President  
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