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Director of Government Relations & Legislative Affairs
Written Testimony – Opponent
House Committee on Appropriations
House Bill 2472
February 7, 2024

Chairperson Waymaster, members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 2472.

Kansas NEA is a member-driven organization that is over 20,000 strong. Our membership includes certified teachers and support professionals from pre-K all the way through higher education. Our members are diverse in nature and offer differing perspectives that are representative of the make-up of our state. Funding of public schools makes up well over 50% of the state budget. Because of this, revenue and budget issues are issues that KNEA takes very seriously.

The FN for HB 2472 states: *Depending on the inflation factor for school finance expenditures in FY 2026 and beyond, which generally compromise over 50 percent of the State General Fund budget each year, the Governor may have to propose the reduction of expenditures in other functions of government to keep school finance expenditures at constitutional levels.*

This type of policy creates a dynamic of division. This puts advocates for social services, infrastructure, higher education, and public schools in adversarial positions that are unnecessary.

In addition to the opposition stated above, we oppose HB 2472 for a few other reasons as well:

- **Constitutionality** - HB 2472 could lead to decisions that could cause school funding levels to be unconstitutional.
- **Irresponsibility** – HB 2472 ties the hands of the Governor to take a responsible approach to the budget process.
- **Dangerous** – HB 2472 could lead to dangerous cuts in the social safety net that would negatively affect Kansans. These cuts would impact schools by preventing students from accessing nutrition, healthcare, and mental health programs, just to name a few.

Thank you for your time.