

Douglas Shane, DVM, PhD
Senate District 37

Senate Bill 255
Kansas Senate Committee on Education

Written Testimony: Proponent

Date: March 20th, 2023

Hearing Date: March 22nd, 2023

Kansas Senate Committee on Education
Senator Molly Baumgardner, Chair

Dear Kansas Senate Committee on Education,

I submit this written testimony as a proponent of Senate Bill 255, an act concerning school districts; relating to school sponsored travel and activities; requiring separate overnight accommodations for students of each biological sex.

My name is Douglas Shane. I am a prior Board of Education member of Louisburg USD 416 and an advocate for children and parents. I submit this testimony to encourage this committee to recognize the necessity of this proposed legislation in the current era. The members of this esteemed committee are acutely aware conventional perspectives on sex and gender in the United States have been abruptly challenged. Activism and coercion on behalf of radical gender ideology is a clear and present threat to the safety, mental well-being, and success of children in Kansas public schools.

Undoubtedly you will hear testimony detailing the story of a high school aged female student who partook in a teacher-sponsored international trip wherein she was assigned to share a bed with a young male who identified as a female. This story is not the only story where children have been forced into uncomfortable, unreasonable, and dangerous situations with members of the opposite sex due to the actions and radical beliefs of adults who were entrusted to provide safety and security for the child. However, my goal is not to go into the horrors this child faced or to elaborate on all the ways common sense is defied by radical gender ideology. Rather, I would like to focus on why the legislation is the effective and proper path forward for Kansas children and Kansas schools.

Local control and governance are foundational to Kansas government. This proposed legislation will undoubtedly be seen as an affront to local control and will face opposition from numerous educators and public education special interest groups. For the honest and informed observer, objection due to concern

of local control will be seen for what it is: rationalization for opposition to the legislation when the true motive for opposition is the belief and adherence to radical gender ideology.

Schools are accustomed to having policy based on state or federal requirements, especially for issues pertaining to discrimination and harassment. The People and governments have decided that, for these issues, leaving the specific policy to the discretion of local control is not the prudent or ethical path. School districts and their staff have already demonstrated the capacity to defy reason in the name of ideology and have done the very thing this legislation seeks to prohibit – forcing biological male and female to share sleeping quarters. This legislation addresses one very specific concern, with cause. It is not based on conjecture or fear. Certainly, the legislation does not address all challenges presented in this new era of radical gender ideology that is resulting in record numbers of gender confused children, but it does take important strides for the protection of children and of the school districts themselves.

One opportunity for clarity in the proposed legislation exists in Section 1. (a) which currently states:

The board of education of each school district shall adopt a policy requiring that separate overnight accommodations be provided for students of each biological sex during school district sponsored travel that requires overnight stays by students.

I would ask that the committee consider amending the language regarding “school district sponsored travel” to “*school sponsored, associated, or affiliated travel that includes overnight stays by students*” or something similar. I can envision staff, admins, and districts focusing specifically on the word “sponsored” and “required” to circumvent the intent of the law. One example is that a district could take the position that travel associated with a club, for instance, is not indeed sponsored by the school district because school funds did not pay for the trip and/or it was not promoted through district communications. A district could also take the position that overnight travel was not required for a particular event. Imagine traveling for a state tournament several hours away and the district tells the student “You are not required to stay overnight for this event. Sorry, but if you want to participate in the overnight stay, you must accept the room accommodations. You can always have your parent/guardian drive you in if you do not wish to stay with the team”. This gives the real opportunity for false choice to be presented to children.

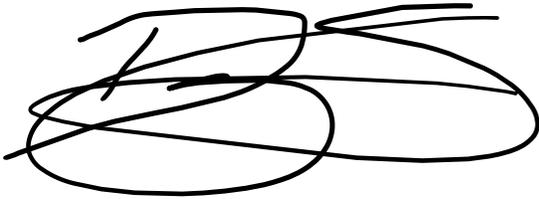
School districts and their staff should not promote, encourage, or force any ideological or lifestyle choices upon any student in the district. It is no more appropriate for a staff member to force Christian faith

teachings onto students than it is to force radical gender ideology onto students. School district needs to identify policies and mechanisms to ensure that children and families of all beliefs are respected and accommodated, without infringing on those who may hold opposing views. This legislation sets a clear and reasonable boundary that should not be crossed, but also provides school districts sufficient local control to determine how to accommodate students requiring various mental and physical needs when it comes to sex and gender.

I sincerely hope you consider advancing this legislation and agree with my position that SB 255 is both reasonable and necessary legislation to pass.

Thank you for your time spent reading this testimony.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Douglas Shane", written over a large, loopy scribble.

Douglas Shane, DVM, PhD
Citizen, Senate District 37