

HB 2199
Committee on Education
February 17, 2015
WRITTEN ONLY
OPPOSE

Chairman Highland and Members of the Committee:

This testimony is submitted today on behalf of the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) in opposition to HB 2199. KCSDV is a statewide non-profit organization whose membership is the 29 sexual and domestic violence programs serving victims across Kansas. Not only do programs work with adult victims of sexual and domestic violence but they also work with child victims and adult survivors of child sexual abuse.

KCSDV is opposed to HB 2199. Child sexual abuse can have severe, long term health and emotional impacts. We know that one way to protect children from abuse is to educate them about appropriate human sexuality. HB 2199 prohibits any local board of education from providing education on human sexuality to students without written parental permission. The bill is unclear as to the definition of "human sexuality," thereby potentially denying children access to important information regarding sexual abuse. Children should have access to basic health and human sexuality information so they are better able to understand when and how to report any potential sexual abuse.

By requiring an opt-in provision, we risk that parental permission forms either don't reach the parent wanting to opt-in or are not returned. Additionally, children may be abused by parents or legal guardians, who may not permit their children to receive information that might stop future abuse. As a consequence, important health and safety education information does not reach the child.

Children need this information for their own safety. For this reason, KCSDV is opposed to HB 2199.

Submitted by,
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