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RE: **Opposition Letter on HB 2486**

January 27, 2016

Dear Kansas House Education Committee,

My name is Patricia Welicky of Bonner Springs, KS and I come to you today to voice my opposition to Education House Bill **2486**. It is true I have repeatedly contacted committee leaders and my own local legislative body on topics effecting the education of my children and Kansas Education at large. So, it is no surprise that I come to you today to ask you to kill Kansas House Bill **2486** in committee. In full disclosure, I am a registered Republican and the School Board President of Unified School District 204. However, my Role as mother to two school aged children has heightened my resolve to voice my opposition to House Bills that will or may negatively impact students and local school districts; especially **House Bill 2486**. Understanding others will come to you with well thought out opposition papers and eloquent testimony in the affirmative and negative, I would like to speak to you frankly but with respect on my opinion on Educational matters.

I know Education takes a huge chunk out of the State Budget but you see, Education was seen by our early Kansas Settlers as a vitally important key to the success of this State and the United States of America. I fear that many of the efficiency reports on Education lose sight on why local school districts operate. which is to **properly** not adequately to **educate the children of this great State**. But this is nearly impossible when bills like **HB 2486** which limit the citizens of deciding what's best for their school districts roll out of various committees at the Kansas Statehouse. Each year the role of the local school boards seems to be under attack without adequate means to refute many of the claims by our own local legislatures and state government. As a school board member, I work tirelessly to ensure that our district is running efficiently and saving tax payer money. But there are times when I need to update facilities and to build new ones. Tying my hands to do so at the State level seems to me to be an intrusion into local control and overreach by the State. By creating a school district bond project review board may add to the roles of the committee structure of the State House but does not solve the issue with Education. The one thing Edwardsville and Bonner Springs communities do not need is the State's version of Big Brother deciding for us what is needed in relation to bonds and facilities enrichment.

Since becoming a local school board member, my awareness is heightened to the negative impacts whether intentional or unintentional that countless education bills have on the future of education at the local level. What surprises me is it is Republicans leading the charge to strip local control of Education. If the tax and non-tax paying citizens desire better facilities for students in their local school district, then they should have the decision to determine that. I could quote studies and facts but you could refute with opposing data and reports so I leave you with simply my thoughts. My children and the children across the State of Kansas need to compete in an ever-changing world having an enriching learning environment is one component for helping them achieve success. I need flexibility in the entering into bonds to fulfill the mission of providing an awesome education not just adequate and suitable one. Before dismissing the proponents of Education at the local level, please remember most of us just want to serve our communities and protect our children's future. I ask that you vote in the negative for Kansas House Bill HB 2486 as well as 2457 and 2504.

Warm regards,

Patricia Welicky of Bonner Springs, Kansas