

WRITTEN TESTIMONY TO BE PRESENTED TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON ETHICS AND ELECTIONS

RE: Consideration of Senate Bill 171

Dear Senators:

I am not able to attend in person and ask that you consider my written testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 171.

I am in my seventh term as a school board member so with 26 years of experience I feel I am qualified to provide testimony on this issue. In my early years, I served on the local school board when the first "overhaul" of the funding formula for schools occurred in the early 1990s. I have weathered the storm of the recent lawsuits and the fallout as a result therefrom. It is my perception that legislators unjustifiably have a chip on their shoulders when it comes to our public schools. It is my belief that many times legislators blame teachers, KNEA, or perhaps the school litigation proponents for the funding issues that currently befall our state.

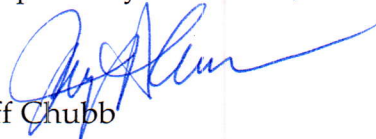
This has spawned a number of bills which I view as anti-public education, such as Senate Bill 171. There is no reason to politicize school board elections. If a school district needs to buy a new vehicle or purchase new textbooks, it shouldn't matter whether a person is a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or even Libertarian. There is never discussion in our local school board as to what party a particular member belongs to. To do so would be counterproductive to the goal of providing a suitable education to our students.

The proponents of Senate Bill 171 disguise their intentions with voter turnout arguments and the like, but the real reason is the recent trend of having a strong Republican turnout for the fall general elections.

I have been a Republican all my life. I have been a Kansan all my life. Local elections are much different than state and federal elections. In my seven election cycles, I can tell you exactly what I have spent . . . zero dollars. In other words, when voters go the polls in local elections, they do not look at a person's party. They look at the person who is running for office because they most likely have a personal knowledge of the

candidate. No so with a state and federal election cycle. That is the major distinction in my mind and one of the most valid reasons to leave it alone and move on to more productive discussion regarding school finance.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAC/ds