

Testimony on
SB 71 - Local Option Budget State Aid Calculation

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

By Cheryl L. Semmel, Executive Director

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On behalf of United School Administrators of Kansas (USA|Kansas), I would like to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to appear in opposition to SB 71. This bill would amend the method for calculating supplemental general state aid (LOB), effective in the current school year.

School districts develop their annual budgets based on the current school funding formula, a study of historical data and projected enrollment trends. Based on the Legislature's action last session, districts believed the intent of the Legislature was to fully fund supplemental general state aid this fiscal year.

According to the Kansas State Department of Education, SB 71 would reduce supplemental general state aid by approximately \$39.1 million *this year* – something that districts did not plan or budget for.

To accommodate reductions of this magnitude, many districts would be required to make deep operational cuts and/or delay expenditures for programs and services for the remainder of the year. Further, the uncertainty created by midyear reductions and changes to the formula run counter to efforts by school districts to maximize efficiencies and effectiveness through advanced planning.

Finally, administrators are committed to providing an excellent and *equitable* education for students in districts throughout the state. This bill appears to create even greater disparities, when you consider the impact on the least wealthy districts (assessed valuation per pupil).

The report prepared by the Kansas State Department of Education provides more detailed information about how each district would be impacted by the proposed change in SB 71. If you have questions about how these reductions would impact schools in your community, I encourage you to talk with your school superintendents and board members.

Thank you for your consideration and USA|Kansas respectfully asks that you not advance SB 71.