

Approved: 2-14-95
Date

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Rochelle Chronister at 3:30 p.m. on January 30, 1995 in Room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present: Ben Barrett, Legislative Research Department
Avis Swartzman, Revisor of Statutes
Lois Thompson, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee: Representative Clay Aurand
Representative Robin Jennison
Norm Wilks, Kansas Association of School Boards

Others attending: See attached list

Hearings opened on **HB 2154 concerning school districts; authorizing the enrollment therein of nonresident pupils under certain circumstances; relating to transportation of such pupils to and from school.**

Representative Clay Aurand, co-author of **HB 2154** stated this bill will allow students to attend the school that is the closest to their home and the school in the community which they consider as their home town. (Attachment 1)

Representative Robin L. Jennison, co-author of **HB 2154** addressed the need for the bill by families in Western Kansas who live in sparse areas. They may live closer to an attendance center in a neighboring district than they do to the attendance center in their own district. Parents should not be subjected to the resulting inconveniences of transportation. (Attachment 2)

Norm Wilks, Director of Labor Relations, Kansas Association of School Board spoke in opposition to the passage of **HB 2154**. The authority of **HB 2154** encourages more movement of students from one district to another not based on the educational interests of the student or district but location and travel. Boards of education should have reasonable certainty of the boundaries of the school district to plan for appropriate education opportunities and programs for children residing within the established boundaries. Such local control or local decision-making is appropriate for a locally elected board of education. (Attachment 3)

The floor was opened to questions by the committee.

Representative Ballard moved and Representative Horst seconded a motion to pass **HB 2065** out favorably. Motion carried. Representative Horst will carry the bill.

Representative Shore moved and Representative Morrison seconded a motion to pass **HB 2063** out favorably. Motion carried. Representative Reinhardt will carry the bill.

Representative Powers distributed "What Happened in Education?" to committee members. (Copy on file with secretary of House Education Committee.)

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

The next meeting of the committee will be January 31.

CLAY AURAND
 REPRESENTATIVE, 109TH DISTRICT
 PHILLIPS, SMITH, JEWELL, REPUBLIC
 AND OSBORNE COUNTIES



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
 REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS
 ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
 TAXATION
 JOINT COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE
 RULES AND REGULATIONS

TESTIMONY ON HB 2154

Madame Chairman and members of the Education Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to testify this afternoon on HB 2154. The essence of this bill has to do with a family's ability to send their children to school in their home community.

The school district boundaries, as they are currently drawn, often times have no logical reason for existing. Through the years unification, consolidation, and school closings, have led to the formation of districts that are large and often of bizarre shape and which do not take into account proximity of the school to the child's residence. This is a standard that should be at the top of the list of considerations rather than at the bottom.

Currently in Kansas the law allows for children to go to a school outside of their district if that school is willing to take them. However, that school is not allowed to pick them up unless the district in which they reside grants permission. This permission is oftentimes not granted because of every districts desire to get the 3600 dollars that follows the pupils to school. The fact that this monetary consideration is afforded more weight than the parents wishes or the child's best interest is something that truly needs to be changed.

I would like to give you example of which I am familiar. Neighbors of mine who have 4 children in grade school live 27 miles from the district's school. If they attended this school they would have to get on the bus before 7 a.m. and also stop and board another bus before arriving at their school. This might not be such a bad thing if that were the only option. There is, however, another school that is only 13 miles away. This school is where both parents graduated. It is in the town where the mother works. It is the town where they attend church. It is THEIR COMMUNITY. It is this school that the parents want their children to attend. Since the bus from this school is not allowed to pick up these children, their parents are forced to drive them

to and from school daily or provide other arrangements. If they attended the school in the district they live, by the time they are 8th graders they will have traveled over 46,000 miles more than would otherwise be needed. What this bill would do is to lessen the burden on this family, and many families like them, and allow for more flexibility in their daily routine. It also allows the children the opportunity to attend school with the children they interact with in other aspects of their lives.

In closing, what this bill will accomplish is allowing students to attend the school that is the closest to their home and is in the community they consider to be their home town. In the over all picture it should be what is best for these children and not how much money that comes with these children that decides where they go to school.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions that may arise.

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TOPEKA

HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
117TH DISTRICT
HODGEMAN, LANE, NESS
RUSH AND FINNEY COUNTIES

TESTIMONY ON HB 2154

Madam Chairman and Members of the Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify regarding House Bill 2154. The need for 2154 results when families living in the sparse areas of Western Kansas live closer to an attendance center in a neighboring district than they do to the attendance center in their own school district. Families who find themselves in this situation have always been able to go to the school outside their district with approval of that school, however, unless the students' home school district allowed it, the receiving school could not send buses to the students' homes to pick them up. Many families have dealt with this situation by meeting school buses at district lines or some other pre-determined pick-up point. To me this has always seemed like an inconvenience a family should not be subjected to just to go to the closest school to their residence, probably located in the town where they go to church, buy groceries and visit friends.

In recent times, rural Kansas like urban Kansas has seen more and more families with both parents working. The inconvenience that existed before is now exacerbated, when not only do the parents need to meet a bus at some pre-determined point in the middle of nowhere but they must make it to work on time sometimes in a different town, in a different district up to 50 miles away. Then arrangements must also be made to meet the bus after school. This situation makes it very difficult for a family to send their child to the closest school if the school can't pick the child up at the residence.

*House Education
Attachment 2
1-30-95*

I realize 2154 encompasses more than just distance. I also think type and quality of roads and geographic impediments are important when addressing the school transportation needs of rural Kansans.

There will undoubtedly be criticism of different components of this bill, but there is no reason children should have to go to school 30 miles away when there is a school 15-20 miles away over much better roads. This committee has the opportunity to make this situation better.

Thank you. I'd be happy to answer questions.

Robin Jennison

KANSAS
ASSOCIATION



OF
SCHOOL
BOARDS



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**Testimony on H.B. 2154
before the
House Committee on Education**

by

**Norm Wilks, Director of Labor Relations
Kansas Association of School Boards**

January 30, 1995

Madam Chairman and members of the Committee, on behalf of the unified school boards of education that are members of the Kansas Association of School Boards, we wish to respectfully express our opposition to the passage of HB 2154.

Our legislative policy supports local boards of education having general authority to take actions in the best interest of the district. Boards of education should have reasonable certainty in the boundaries of the school district and plan and provide for the education of children living within such boundaries. The concept of local control should allow local boards to make such attendance decisions rather than the State Board.

Current law allows boards to enter into agreements to provide for the attendance of students in schools of another district. (K.S.A. 72-8233) The board of each district must find that the change and agreement is in the best interest of the education system of the school district.

*House Education
Attachment 3
1-30-95*

The authority of HB 2154 encourages more movement of students from one district to another not based on the educational interests of the student or district but location and travel.

Boards of education should have reasonable certainty of the boundaries of the school district to plan for appropriate education opportunities and programs for children residing within the established boundaries. Such local control or local decision-making is appropriate for a locally elected board of education.

For these reasons, we oppose the passage of HB 2154. Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.