



February 13, 2023

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Kansas Action for Children
Opponent Written Testimony on HB 2238
House Committee on Education

Chairperson Thomas and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 2238, a bill that would discriminate against transgender youth and prevent them from playing sports alongside their peers. Kansas Action for Children is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization working to make Kansas a place where every child has the opportunity to grow up healthy and thrive.

Adolescence provides challenges for all youth as they navigate changes in their world. For transgender individuals, these challenges are magnified by discrimination, bullying, and exclusion as they negotiate this trying time to be their most authentic selves. These discriminatory and traumatic experiences are why transgender youth are at higher risk of experiencing depression, engaging in self-harm, and attempting suicide.

This bill sends a message of rejection to transgender youth. Regardless of athletic participation, it demonstrates that the Kansas Legislature does not value all youth equally and is willing to put the harmful physiological cost of being excluded onto vulnerable youth. Already this session, the Committee has touted the benefits of extracurricular activities, athletic and otherwise, discussing the community that they build among students and how participation even saves student lives. HB 2238 is moving in the opposite direction compared to those beliefs.

Every Kansas child deserves belonging, safety, and inclusion. **Kansas Action for Children urges the committee to protect the health and well-being of transgender youth by rejecting HB 2238.**

Thank you for the opportunity to share information with you today. Feel free to reach me if you have any questions at daniel@kac.org.