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Testimony to the House K-12 Education Budget Committee

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**BILL NUMBER:** HB 2612

**PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL:** Opponent

**ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY:** Written Only

Chair Williams and the Committee,

I'm writing to ask the committee to oppose HB 2612.

Once again, we find ourselves engineering creative ways to undermine public schools in Kansas. While I commend the authors of this bill for their efforts at creative destruction, this bill is bad for students, families, communities, and Kansas.

Public school systems are the backbone of so many communities. Their accreditation, by extension, is essential to their function for the working families served by these institutions. Communities, teachers, and staff put their blood, sweat, and tears into their schools. This bill seeks to undermine that work by eliminating school accreditation for any minor infraction of Kansas State Law.

The rationale for such a bill is anti-public school. Threatening the accreditation of a public school system, which jeopardizes students' futures, is intentional. This bill will enable the passage of subsequent "culture war issue" bills (so-called problems like "CRT," "DEI," and other silly non-issues) to penalize schools for teaching topics the legislature decides are verboten. This bill would enable the legislature, on a whim, to subvert the state Board of Education and strip a school district of its accreditation for wholly political reasons. This is, quite literally, playing politics with the lives of families and children.

I note the exclusion of non-public schools from this level of scrutiny. Communities invest their valued treasure and time into their schools to see them succeed. This bill takes a hostile stance towards these public, communal efforts. In the meantime, it turns a blind eye to unregulated schools operating for profit. A high school with many parent volunteers, community help, and local control is subjected to destructive "oversight" because it touches the culture war issue du jour. At the same time, a for-profit voucher-style "micro-school" sees no similar oversight or control. This is a craven assault on public institutions.

Please oppose HB 2612. It violates existing due process, violates local control, and is destructive to our public institutions.

Ian Graves

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