

Senate Bill 128
Proponent written testimony

Chairman Tyson and the Assessment and Taxation Committee:

As a homeschool parent, I would hope any legislation passed to help fund school choice or credits in Kansas would continue to protect the freedom of all private schools and their curriculum at all costs. No government intervention in accredited and unaccredited private schools should be allowed because this is an important freedom to parents in Kansas.

I believe SB 128 is far superior to HB2218 in many ways; specifically, it avoids the unnecessary expenses and private school intrusion of a newly-created oversight board created with HB2218.

With SB128, the program is easily attached to a child of school age, as is verified by their name, birthdate, and Social Security number on the tax return. It also gets the money directly into the hands of the parents so they can directly fund their child's education with no delays or problems with a state board dictating what is an allowed curriculum or class.

Any oversight of SB128 would be easy to check at the local public school with the state never needing to interfere in the private school system; since a simple enrollment records confirmation at the child's local public school district would confirm if a child is enrolled there after the parent took the credit.

My concern would be that you make sure the credit is completely refundable and not able to be offset by any other debt, just as the Covid stimulus money was also protected in order to get it into the hands of the taxpayer. Otherwise, a parent could have intentions of taking the credit for a private school, and then a creditor take the money before the parent sees it, forcing the parent to keep their child in the local school district, and setting up the appearance of fraud.

My second concern is that the credit be large enough that the parent can actually afford a private school. Otherwise, the money is not truly following the child, and only those with the means to supplement the education cost would be able to send their child to a private school. This would only further discriminate against lower income children whose parents feel they are trapped in their local school district that they believe is failing them.

SB128 could help Kansas school children thrive in both unaccredited and accredited private schools alike and improve the quality of our public school systems with the healthy competition, insuring the future of our children is bright with excellence in their education.

Thank you
Jennifer Williams
Spring Hill KS