

SB128 – Ad Astra Opportunity Tax Credit
Proponent Testimony
Oral In-Person With Written Testimony

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Honorable Chairman Tyson, Vice-Chair Peck, Ranking Minority Leader Holland, and Committee Members:

Good morning. I am thankful for this opportunity to speak on behalf of an issue that I care about in this public forum. Senate Bill 128 should be adopted.

That the State of KS supports & encourages homeschoolers is so important. We have in the state and ideal situation for homeschoolers—little to no regulation. Parents homeschool because we know what is important to us and we know what & how we want our kids to learn. Unlike other states, Kansas trusts parents to educate our own children. It was right here in this Capitol Building at an event called Day Under the Dome, that I talked to someone who introduced me to Classical Conversations, which is the homeschool plan, if you will, that we follow. I can say confidently that homeschooling has changed all our lives for the better.

A little about my family—my husband and I have 4 children, 2 of whom are grown. One of them has graduated college and is gainfully employed in TN. She went on almost a full academic scholarship. The other earned a 4-year US Army scholarship, studies Kinesiology and is in the ROTC program at Harding University. The other two are high school students at home.

Back in 2010, we were new to homeschooling though, and the expenses were significant and eye-opening. Thankfully we took the plunge and have been hugely satisfied with our choice. We were able to choose a program that fit our family, our priorities, and our values, even if it did throw the budget out of whack for a while.

Money is the smallest barrier, but it isn't nothing. We homeschool because we know what is important to us and we know what & how we want our kids to learn. That is why SB 128 works. This bill doesn't come with any red tape or potential red tape. We all know that money given comes with regulations, audits, oversight, etc. Putting people's money that they are already paying in the form of state taxes back into their own hands might be the push more families need to do what we did. Parents decide what is important to them and can use the credit however they choose.

Edu. Savings Accounts sound like they might work for certain types of schools, and might even give the public schools some much-needed competition. There are other bills about scholarships. That works-- for those who qualify. I believe the best way to continue to encourage homeschooling without taking away freedom, is a simple tax credit and that is why I came today and am supporting Senate Bill128.

Since 2010, I have been grateful many times for KS homeschool 'regulations' or lack of them. Kansas by design has a 'hands off' approach to homeschooling that benefits everyone. We can be proud of our lack of regulation. Freedom works.

I kindly ask for your support of SB128 for these reasons.

Thank you,
Michelle Eagleman
Lawrence, KS