

Opponent Testimony of HB2238
For the Senate Education Committee
March 6, 2023
Joe Grochmal
Kansas resident

Chair Baumgardner and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent written testimony on House Bill 2238.

I am writing today as a resident of Kansas with a concern for the well-being of transgender youth. I oppose this bill on the grounds that we should be seeking ways to support and embrace people rather than alienating them.

Studies have shown that transgender youth are at a higher risk of depression, anxiety, and suicide than their cisgender peers. Exclusion from sports, which are often a source of social connection and self-esteem, can exacerbate these risks. Bans on transgender athletes send a message that transgender people are not welcome or valued in society, which can contribute to feelings of isolation and marginalization.

This bill specifically targets persons participating in K-12 sports. Let us not forget the fundamental purpose of those activities which are to promote comradery, sportsmanship, and an active lifestyle. Passage of this bill demonstrates that we would value winning over those incredibly important virtues.

In closing, I want to reiterate that we need to respect the importance of mental health and support individuals questioning their gender rather than excluding them. Thank you for your consideration.