

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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MARI-LYNN POSKIN
20TH DISTRICT

Representative Mari-Lynn Poskin, Oral Opponent Testimony
HB 2136: Expanding student eligibility under the tax credit for low-income students scholarship
Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025, 1:30 PM Room 218-N

Thank you Madam Chair and Members of the House Education Committee,

I'm Representative Mari-Lynn Poskin, Kansas House 20. I stand in strong opposition to HB 2136, further draining State General Funds and funneling them to private, mostly religious schools. With the changes proposed in this bill, it can no longer even be pretended that it's just to help "low income" students. Four new categories of eligibility are opened up with NO income limits. If a recipient's family qualifies once, they maintain eligibility no matter how high their income shoots up. Foster and kinship care is now included no matter the income, as are Military, EMS Firefighters, LEO's etc.

Let's see how this can really play out:

An Army Colonel at Ft Leavenworth can make over \$9,000 a month in just basic pay and be married to a physician who makes six figures and qualify for \$8,000 per child per year.

Years Experience	Monthly Basic Pay	Yearly Basic Pay	Drill Pay	Hazard Pay
Starting Pay	\$8,067.90 / mo	\$96,814.80 / yr	\$268.93 / drill	\$250.00
Over 2 years	\$8,863.20 / mo	\$106,358.40 / yr	\$295.44 / drill	\$250.00
Over 3 years	\$9,444.90 / mo	\$113,338.80 / yr	\$314.83 / drill	\$250.00
Over 4 years	\$9,444.90 / mo	\$113,338.80 / yr	\$314.83 / drill	\$250.00
Over 6 years	\$9,481.20 / mo	\$113,774.40 / yr	\$316.04 / drill	\$250.00
Over 8 years	\$9,887.40 / mo	\$118,648.80 / yr	\$329.58 / drill	\$250.00
Over 10 years	\$9,941.40 / mo	\$119,296.80 / yr	\$331.38 / drill	\$250.00
Over 12 years	\$9,941.40 / mo	\$119,296.80 / yr	\$331.38 / drill	\$250.00
Over 14 years	\$10,506.30 / mo	\$126,075.60 / yr	\$350.21 / drill	\$250.00



A Fire Captain in Leawood, my district, can make over \$175,000 per year and be married to a CEO who also makes six figures and qualify for \$8,000 per child per year.

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City of Leawood Classification and Compensation Plan

2025 Fire Position / Pay Grade Classifications				
Position Title	Pay Grade	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum
Firefighter I	F1	\$ 56,510.04	\$ 63,573.80	\$ 70,637.55
Firefighter II	F2	61,030.84	68,659.70	76,288.55
Firefighter III	F3	65,913.31	74,152.47	82,391.64
Firefighter Master I	F4	71,186.38	80,084.67	88,982.97
Firefighter Master II	F5	76,881.29	86,491.45	96,101.61
Firefighter Master III	F6	83,031.79	93,410.76	103,789.74
Fire Prevention Lieutenant	F7	89,674.33	100,883.62	112,092.91
Firefighter Lieutenant	F7	89,674.33	100,883.62	112,092.91
Fire Captain	F8	93,865.63	107,945.48	122,025.32
Fire Prevention Captain	F8	93,865.63	107,945.48	122,025.32
Fire Battalion Chief	F9	97,150.93	116,581.11	136,011.30
Fire Division Chief - Operations	F10	111,723.57	134,068.28	156,413.00
Fire Division Chief - Emergency Medical Services	F10	111,723.57	134,068.28	156,413.00
Fire Division Chief - Prevention / Fire Marshal	F10	111,723.57	134,068.28	156,413.00
Deputy Fire Chief	F11	116,010.11	140,112.28	168,214.65
Fire Chief	F12	139,325.86	177,640.47	215,955.09



That means that millionaires in my district with six figure incomes, and access to the TOP public schools in the state, can enroll their children in eligible private schools to bankroll \$8,000 a year, for a dozen years, netting \$96,000, per child. Multimillionaires.

Next, let's talk about the insanity of raising the tax credit to 100%. Tax credits are generally issued to promote specific behavior deemed important: (<https://www.investopedia.com/terms/t/taxcredit.asp>).

Understanding Tax Credits

Federal and state governments may grant tax credits to promote specific behaviors that benefit the [economy](#), the environment, or anything else that the government deems important.^[4]

There is NO OTHER 100% tax credit for charitable giving for regular people in Kansas tax code. Are we saying in HB 2136 as a legislature, that there is nothing more important for the state to promote than sending children to private school?

Please understand that of the current list of 127 eligible private schools, only 3 are not religiously affiliated. So, under HB 2136 every congregation with an eligible school could sweep every last dime of its congregation's Kansas tax liability from State General Funds to their religious school through scholarship organizations. I have to say it again...Holy tax scams, what a shell game! Since its inception in 2014, the long game has always been expanding this vehicle to become a universal voucher scheme. I ask that this committee put a stop to it, today.

Sincerely,