

Testimony to the House Committee on Education

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BILL NUMBER: HB 2136

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY

DATE OF HEARING: February 5, 2025

Chair Estes & Members of the Committee:

I am writing to voice my opposition to bill number HB 2136.

Public schools belong to us all. We don't pay taxes to educate *only* our own children; we pay taxes to educate *all* children. An educated citizenry is what makes our country great.

Public money used to pay for religious school tuition means that I am being forced to support religious institutions, even though they may not express my beliefs. This is a major reason our Constitution separates church and state

HB 2136 has the potential to bankrupt our state in a few years. We can look at Arizona to see the desperate situation vouchers can cause. This so-called scholarship tax credit is very enticing for large corporations who want the schools and other public services to transition to profit-making businesses. This bill increases the tax credit for donors to 100% with a \$20 million program cap. Since tax credits are dollar for dollar, passage of this bill will allow \$20 Million to be removed annually from our mutual state funds. And I think this bill allows for the maximum to be increased each future year.

Public funds belong to all of us, and we pay our taxes with the expectation that they will be used for the common good; for example, even though I personally will never drive on all the highways in Kansas, they are essential for the functioning and prosperity of our state. Allowing and encouraging public tax funds to be diverted to private institutions will gradually cause our state services to deteriorate.

Please vote NO on HB 2136

