

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Sara Askew

TITLE: Kansas Citizen

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104.

This program does not address safe storage of guns. That should be a big priority to keep children safe from guns. Removing control from local school boards will not help the boards create curriculum to best meet their students' needs. If a district wishes to offer a firearm safety program, that district should have the ability to pilot and choose their own program, just like they do with new science, math, english or social studies curriculum.

We own guns and my husband's family are hunters and gun owners as well. Gun safety is a huge part of our lives. My husband went through hunter safety courses, and our guns are locked with ammunition in a separate location. These should be the focus of keeping kids safe from guns. Laws to properly secure a gun, thus preventing children from coming upon a fire weapon, will do more good than the Eddie Eagle program, and studies show this.

In addition, lobbyists should not be deciding our curriculum. That should be left up to local school boards to decide what is the best fit for their district.

In closing I ask you to vote no on HB 2104

Sara Askew
Wichita

A-2

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Alexandra Battey

TITLE: Kansas citizen

EMAIL ADDRESS: alibattey@gmail.com

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY:

Dear Chair & members of the committee,

I am writing to oppose HB 2104. As a parent of a three year old, gun safety is a major priority for me. Guns remain the number one cause of death for children in Kansas, and we must use all of the tools at our disposal to address this serious issue. While I support passing bills to protect children from gun violence, HB 2104 does not accomplish this.

The Eddie Eagle program is ineffective, as evidenced by multiple studies indicating that this program does not make children less likely to play with an unsecured gun. Programs like Eddie Eagle that place the burden of gun safety on children feels akin to asking my three year old to make sure she buckles her own car seat—this is my responsibility as an adult, not hers. It is unreasonable to expect children to understand the gravity of risk in handling an unsecured, unsupervised gun, even if they are instructed not to touch an unsecured gun. Anyone who has told a child “no” should know that this is not a viable strategy on its own, especially when the stakes are this high.

Responsible gun ownership includes securing your gun and ammunition against unauthorized use—whether that is by a curious child, a vulnerable teen at risk of self harm or suicide, or an individual planning to use the gun as part of a crime. There is no educational program that removes the burden of responsibility from a gun owner, and passing legislation that pretends otherwise is an irresponsible act that does not make our children safer.

Thank you for your time. Please vote NO on HB 2104.

Alexandra Battey

Overland Park, KS

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Angela Beck

TITLE: Leavenworth, Kansas Citizen

EMAIL ADDRESS: the5becks@gmail.com

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104 as the Eddie Eagle program does not address the adult's responsibility to ensure guns are securely stored, instead it places the responsibility of gun safety on the child. Mandating the NRA's Eddie Eagle program removes local control from school boards to determine the curriculum that best fits the needs of their student body. School districts that wish to offer a firearms safety program should have the ability to evaluate and determine which curriculum best fits their needs, not be forced to use curriculum mandated by the legislature.

Programs like the National Rifle Association's Eddie Eagle merely focus on teaching children not to touch guns without permission and only to tell an adult if they find one, but studies have shown that programs like that are not effective. Two 2004 studies found that the Eddie Eagle program was ineffective in discouraging young children from handling unsecured firearms. One study found that young children who go through a week-long gun safety training are just as likely as children with no training to play with a handgun when they find one. The Eddie Eagle program has been deemed ineffective by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Along with being ineffective, the Eddie Eagle program does not address the adult's responsibility to ensure guns are securely stored. The NRA has claimed the Eddie Eagle program is an alternative to secure storage bills. However, the expert who the NRA enlisted to help revamp their program in 2015 has publicly said "I assure you, I wouldn't have anything to do with it" if she knew the NRA would push their program as an alternative to secure storage bills.

This bill usurps the authority of the elected officers of local school boards to make curriculum decisions. School districts that wish to offer a firearm safety program should have the ability to evaluate and determine which curriculum best fits their needs, not forced to use curriculum mandated by the legislature.

In closing, I urge you to vote no on HB 2104.

Sincerely,

Angela Beck

Leavenworth

February 6, 2025
Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Kristen Blackton

TITLE: Kansas Citizen

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

WRITTEN-ONLY TESTIMONY

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104 as mandating the ineffective Eddie Eagle firearms safety program removes local control from school boards and local districts to determine which curriculum best suits their students.

I have many problems with the Eddie Eagle program itself. For one, there have been multiple studies that have found the program was ineffective in its mission to discourage young children from handling unsecured firearms. The American Academy of Pediatrics also has deemed this program as ineffective as it focuses on children's behavior instead of the root cause of unintentional shootings: unsecured firearms.

However, even if the Eddie Eagle program were effective, I would still oppose this bill because it violates the concept of local control. I was an educator for ten years and served on multiple curriculum committees during that time, so I am well-acquainted with the methods for choosing curricula that will best serve students. The expertise of teachers and local school boards cannot be discounted, yet this bill would usurp that authority and expertise by denying local elected officials and members of the school district the ability to make decisions for their own community members. School districts that wish to offer a firearm safety program should have the right to evaluate all of their program options and determine which is the best fit for their students' needs. It is not the job of this legislative body to force one specific curriculum on the students of an entire state with *many* different types of communities composed of many different students.

For these reasons, I ask that you please vote no on HB 2104.

Sincerely,

Kristen Blackton
Shawnee, KS

Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 2104
Submitted to the House Federal and State Affairs Committee
February 5, 2025

Dear Chairman Carpenter and Committee Members:

My name is Deborah Boatright. I am a parent, grandparent, and retired Kansas public-school educator. I offer this testimony because I am opposed to HB 2104 and the teaching of the “Eddie Eagle Program” in Kansas public schools.

There is no evidence Eddie Eagle is effective in preventing children from accessing unsecured firearms in the home. There is research that children who have gone through such training are just as likely to approach and handle firearms when not supervised as children who have not received such training. (Examples of research: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/14702451/>; <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11943968/>; <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15342889/>) Children do not always follow adult instruction, especially when the adults are not present. In a group of unsupervised children who have access to an unsecured firearm, it only takes one of them to “disobey the rules” and cause a senseless tragedy.

Households that lock firearms and secure ammunition have an 85% lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children. Yet approximately 4.6 million American children still live in homes with unsecured, loaded firearms. It’s fine to talk with children about being responsible in the presence of guns, but that is a safeguard, not a guarantee. Safe storage is the only guarantee a child will not access and use a loaded firearm.

Firearms in the home should always be locked and unloaded, with ammunition stored separately. Doing this is not the responsibility of children. The onus is on adults to keep children safe. I fully support programs that educate adults about protecting their families by storing their firearms securely.

Finally, local schools should always have the right to choose the safety education program that works best for their district. HB 2104 ignores that principle. Sadly, an ever-increasing number of state-imposed mandates for local school districts makes it ever-more difficult for classroom teachers to provide the best education possible for their students and their community.

I ask that you vote “no” on HB 2104. Thank you.

Deborah S. Boatright
4112 Wheat State Street
Lawrence, Kansas 66049

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

Ian Brannan

Private Citizen

idbrannan@yahoo.com

HB 2104, Standardizing firearm safety programs in school districts.

Opponent

Written only testimony

Chair Kessler and members of the committee,

I am writing to voice my opposition for HB 2104. As someone who loves the Second Amendment, as someone who is a gunowner, as someone who wants children to be safe, I strongly urge you not to pass this bill.

In the state of Kansas, schools can already allow a gun safety course. Through K.S.A. 72-3266, alternative educational opportunities can be made for course credit—including a gun safety program should a school feel that to be necessary. This bill reaffirms that a school may have a gun safety course, but with a problematic requirement.

According to this bill, schools that offer such a program would be forced to use the Eddie the Eagle gun safety program through the National Rifle Association or any successor program or the hunter education in our schools program offered by the Kansas department of wildlife and parks or any successor program. What makes this a bad deal is that this limits the available gun safety programs that schools may offer their students now and in the future. This bill robs students the ability to access other gun safety programs (current and future ones) that schools may deem more effective all for the sake of NRA favoritism.

With this governmental limitation on gun safety programs, incentives for the development of better gun safety programs for children go away. There is no reason to develop a gun safety program that is more attention-grabbing and more appealing to kids if the NRA or the government get to make the final decision as to which gun safety program schools use.

Please do not limit the gun safety educational opportunities in Kansas schools. Please vote 'no' on HB 2104.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Ian Brannan

Topeka, KS

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Kimberly Daneck Brown

TITLE: Kansas Citizen, Practicing Kansas CPA, and Mom of 2 toddlers

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104 as the Eddie Eagle program does not address the adult's responsibility to ensure guns are securely stored. This program puts the onus of responsibility on children, instead of adults.

The Eddie Eagle program does not address the adult's responsibility to ensure guns are securely stored; instead, it focuses on teaching children not to touch guns without permission and to tell an adult if they find one. It is always an adult's responsibility to prevent unauthorized access to guns, not a curious child's responsibility to avoid guns. The NRA has claimed the Eddie Eagle program is an alternative to secure storage bills. But the expert who the NRA enlisted to help revamp their program in 2015 has publicly said "I assure you, I wouldn't have anything to do with it" if she knew the NRA would push their program as an alternative to secure storage bills.

Please vote no on HB 2104.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kim D. Brown".

Kimberly Daneck Brown

February 5, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: David Carttar

TITLE: Kansas Citizen

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY

Dear Chair Kessler, Committee members, and staff:

I come from a family of educators. My mother was a teacher and later a school-board president. My wife has been a teacher for nearly two decades. Two principles that educators persistently follow are to offer lessons that are effective in achieving their stated goals, and always to pursue the best interests of children. HB 2104 violates both of those principles, as well as the principle of local control in our state.

By compelling Kansas school districts who offer gun-safety lessons to follow the NRA's Eddie Eagle curriculum, HB 2104 second-guesses the judgment of local communities by imposing a template designed by a privately-funded industry group. But what does that template represent? The NRA's program is demonstrably ineffective in achieving its stated goal: teaching kids to stay away from guns. A 2004 study by the American Association of Pediatrics found that Eddie Eagle failed to prepare kids for real-life situations where a gun was present.

In a broader sense, HB 2104 fails kids by mandating a curriculum that places responsibility for life-or-death decisions in the hands of children, instead of gun-owning adults who are actually accountable for the safety of the children in their care.

An estimated 4.6 million American children live in homes with at least one gun that is loaded and unlocked. Each year, hundreds of kids in the U.S. unintentionally shoot themselves or others; and in incidents of gunfire in schools, up to 80% of the weapons come from the homes of shooters' relatives or friends.

Please don't let a privately-funded interest group use public schools to put the blame for gun violence on kids. Let school districts preserve the freedom to choose more effective programs, including those that put the responsibility where it belongs: on gun owners, who should keep their weapons locked and unloaded, with ammunition stored separately when not in use.

I humbly ask members of the committee to vote NO on this erosion of local control, and of personal safety for Kansas children.

Respectfully,

David Carttar

Lawrence, Kansas

Subject: Please Oppose HB 2104

Dear Committee Members,

I urge you to oppose HB 2104 and Eddie Eagle training. As gun violence is the #1 cause of death among children, the legislature should be addressing this issue. However, mandating the NRA's Eddie Eagle curriculum is not the answer. First, the job of selecting curriculum lies with the State Board of Education and local school boards, not the legislature. Second, the Eddie Eagle program has been shown to be ineffective in reducing the likelihood that children will mishandle a firearm in an unsupervised situation.

The onus to keep guns out of reach should always be on adults — we owe it to our kids to keep them safe. If lawmakers were really interested in protecting our children, they would support programs which put the responsibility on parents to securely store firearms, not on children.

Instead, the legislature should be focused on introducing a secure firearm storage bill. Research has shown that households that locked both firearms and ammunition were associated with an 85% lower risk of unintentional firearm injuries and death among children, as well as decreasing incidents of suicide and school shootings.

Please consider giving the secure storage bill a committee hearing.

Please vote NO to sustain the Governor's veto of HB 2104.

Thank you,
David Culkin
Leavenworth
Veteran

NAME: Molly Dopheide

TITLE: Kansan

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

ORAL WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written only

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104 as the NRA's Eddie Eagle gun safety course is a proven ineffective program. Additionally, requiring school districts to use only this program and removes choice from locally elected officials.

This study by the American Academy of Pediatrics, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/14702451/> concluded programs like Eddie Eagle are ineffective.

If a school district does choose to teach gun safety, locally-elected school boards should have the freedom to choose which program to use.

Please don't waste our tax dollars on a program that is proven to be ineffective.

Vote no on HB 2104

Molly Dopheide

Leavenworth



**Written Opponent Testimony on
HB 2104
House Federal & State Affairs Committee**

**By
Leah Fliter
Assistant Executive Director of Advocacy**

**Kansas Association of School Boards
lfliter@kasb.org
February 6, 2025**

Chair Kessler and Members of the Committee,

KASB offers this testimony in opposition to HB 2104. KASB's member-adopted permanent policies affirm the authority of local boards of education over curriculum decisions and calls upon the Legislature to reject proposals that mandate or control local curriculum decisions:

2. Curriculum Authority

A district's curriculum should be established by the local board of education, not by state statute. KASB opposes efforts to directly or indirectly limit the board's ability to determine curriculum, library, and other instructional materials.

Choosing instructional materials is squarely within the constitutional authority of local boards of education. In its 2025 Resolution on State Issues, KASB members reaffirmed their steadfast support of local control of such decisions:

We support management of public schools under locally elected boards of education, including setting curriculum, staffing, financial management and policies, so that such schools can progress and meet State Board standards.

There are currently no limiting factors to districts' implementation of firearms safety programs. In fact, in many communities, district facilities serve as the location for these programs including, but not limited to the Eddie Eagle Gunsafe program, the Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks Hunter Safety Program, and possibly others.

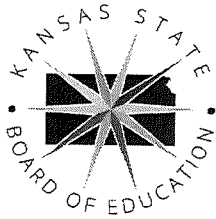
As we understand HB 2104, the bill would drastically alter this current reality. Under the bill, if a school district chooses to provide firearm safety education programs, it must use only the programs specified in the bill. Having the Legislature dictate to local boards of education and the State Board of Education which curriculum a district may choose to meet learning standards is an unnecessary and likely unconstitutional overreach into the decision-making authority of local school boards, as well as the authority of the State Board of Education to adopt learning standards for public schools.

In addition, the bill also says such programs “shall be offered so as to ensure that all students are provided the opportunity to take the course.” We are unclear what this means. Unless the program was required of all students, presumably some students might have to make choices among electives. Furthermore, it is possible some parents or students may not want to participate in such a course. This language again suggests that local management decisions would be controlled by legislative mandate rather than by local boards of education in partnership with their parents, students, communities, and with the State Board.

For these reasons, KASB respectfully requests the committee not to advance HB 2104.

Thank you.

KASB is a non-profit service organization built on an abiding belief in Kansas public schools. We have put the needs of students and K-12 leaders first since 1917.



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Danny Zeck
District 1

Melanie Haas
District 2

Michelle Dombrosky
District 3

Connie O'Brien
District 4

Cathy Hopkins
District 5

Beryl New
District 6

Dennis Hershberger
District 7

Betty J. Arnold
District 8

Jim Porter
District 9

Debby Potter
District 10

2/6/2025

Opponent Testimony for House Bill 2104

House Committee Federal and State Affairs

Cathy Hopkins and Danny Zeck, Liaisons

Kansas State Board of Education

Chair Kessler and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony regarding House Bill 2104 on behalf of the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education voted to prioritize the Constitutional authority given to the State Board of Education and the authority of local boards of education in the Board's 2025 Legislative Priorities. House Bill 2104 derogates the State Board of Education's Constitutional authority to set course standards due to the bill's prescriptive nature of allowable programs. The bill also usurps local boards of education's authority in determining appropriate curriculum best suited for their district in alignment with Kansas educational standards set by the State Board of Education.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our testimony,

Cathy Hopkins

Danny Zeck

Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Danielle George

TITLE: Kansas Citizen

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104 as School districts that wish to offer a firearm safety program should have the ability to evaluate and determine which curriculum best fits their needs, not forced to use curriculum mandated by the legislature.

This bill strips control of curriculum from local school districts. This bill takes away the agency from local elected officials and school boards to determine what is best for their community. This would enforce overreaching federal oversight that is unnecessary and potentially harmful.

Besides the NRA being corrupt, they do not have individuals as their best interests. Voting no should be obvious for anyone who wants less government oversight.

In closing I am asking you to vote no on HB 2104.

Danielle George

Kansas Citizen

February 5, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Danielle Giarla

TITLE: Kansas Citizen

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104 as I have done previously when the Eddie Eagle program was attempted to be pushed through to our public schools.

I was raised in a household where we learned about gun safety at a young age, I was properly trained and my father who served in the US Army required that my brother and I take the Kansas Hunter Safety program and pass with a 75% or higher in order to go hunting with him and hold a firearm. He understood that he needed to securely store his firearms and touted the importance of proper handling if and when we came across a firearm. My father understood that in order to protect children, he would require us to get the proper training and put the onus of that safety lesson on him as our parent. If lawmakers were really interested in protecting our children, they would support programs which put the responsibility on parents to securely store firearms, not children.

This program is ineffective as it focuses on the wrong things, placing responsibility of gun safety on children rather than the parents and guardians. Children, whose brains are not fully developed until 25. Research shows that tragedies are preventable. If we focus instead on common-sense secure storage laws, and school board notifications. It was the rule of our home- if there is a gun in the house, it is kept unloaded, locked, and separate from ammunition. We can all do our part to ensure that guns do not get into the hands of children.

Please vote NO to sustain the Governor's veto of HB 2104.

Danielle Giarla

Kansas Citizen

NAME: Sherry Giebler

TITLE: Kansas Citizen, EdS, LPC

EMAIL ADDRESS: sherry.giebler@gmail.com

BILL NUMBER: HB 2014

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only Testimony

DATE OF HEARING: February 6, 2025

Chair Kessler & Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my deep and unwavering opposition to HB 2014.

For 32 years, I have devoted my life to Kansas students and families as a public-school teacher, counselor, and adjunct professor. My passion has always been to create a safe and nurturing environment for children to grow, learn, and thrive. That's why I find this bill so concerning. Requiring Kansas public schools to use the NRA's safety program strips local communities of their right to decide what's best for their own students. Our state has always entrusted school districts—through locally elected boards—to determine the curriculum that aligns with their values and needs. Mandating a one-size-fits-all approach disregards the expertise of local educators, administrators, and curriculum specialists. Worse yet, it eliminates flexibility for schools to use other effective, free, and law enforcement-led safety programs.

More importantly, this bill misses the bigger picture. The real issue isn't about choosing one safety program over another—it's about protecting our children from preventable tragedies. We should be focusing on proven solutions: promoting secure firearm storage, advocating for common-sense storage laws, and ensuring parents are notified about the risks. The numbers don't lie—too many young lives are lost to unintentional shootings every year. But research shows these tragedies can be prevented. Studies reveal that locking both firearms and ammunition reduces the risk of unintentional firearm injuries among children and teens by 85 percent.

I know this pain firsthand. As a public-school counselor, I have attended too many funerals for students whose lives were cut short far too soon. That grief never fades. More than 700 children die by gun suicide in America every year, and access to an unsecured firearm is often the deciding factor. The data is clear: having a gun in the home triples the risk of suicide, and more than 80 percent of child gun suicides involve a firearm belonging to a family member. But there is hope—secure storage saves lives. Studies show that when firearms and ammunition are stored locked and separately, the risk of self-inflicted firearm injuries among children and teenagers drops by 78 percent.

This is not a political issue. It's a matter of protecting our children and giving families the knowledge and tools they need to keep their loved ones safe. I urge you—please vote NO on HB 2014.

Sherry Giebler EdS, LPC



Kansas  National
Education Association

Making public schools great for every child

KANSAS NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION / 715 SW 10TH AVENUE / TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1686

Timothy R. Graham
Director of Government Relations & Legislative Affairs
Written Testimony – Opponent
House Committee on Federal and State Affairs
House Bill 2104
February 6, 2025

Chairperson Kessler and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 2104.

Kansas NEA is a member-driven organization representing all 40,000 educators in the state of Kansas, with nearly 22,000 active members. The positions we advocate for have been proposed, debated, and adopted by several hundred members selected by their peers to attend our annual Representative Assembly.

One such resolution on curriculum states:

"Kansas NEA believes educators must be involved in the development of curriculum and the adoption of instructional materials."

The most fundamental way to ensure that teachers are included in curriculum decisions is to keep these decisions at the local level. Under HB 2104, the legislature would compel the Kansas State Board of Education to create curriculum standards for a new learning program while also mandating the instructional materials that local school boards must use should they choose to offer such a program. Both actions circumvent the traditional process and would further hinder educator involvement.

KNEA strongly supports the principle that curriculum standards fall under the constitutional authority and responsibility of the Kansas State Board of Education. If the State Board of Education determines that firearm safety curriculum is a priority, it has the authority to establish such standards without legislative mandate.

Additionally, KNEA believes that curriculum materials for classroom instruction should be determined by local school boards. If a local school board opts to provide firearm safety training, it should have the autonomy to explore and select curriculum materials that best align with the unique needs of its community, families, educators, and students.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to oppose HB 2104.

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Marcel Harmon

TITLE: Private Citizen and former School Board Member / President (USD 497)

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only Testimony

Dar Chair Kessler and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to share my opponent testimony against HB 2104. My name is Marcel Harmon, and I am a voter in Douglas County. I am writing today to encourage the committee to vote no on HB 2104, as mandating a firearm safety curriculum (that has been shown to be ineffective) from the legislature takes control away from local school boards.

As a former school board member, I find this bill very problematic in that it takes away the authority of local school board members, who have been duly elected by their local communities, to make curriculum decisions. It also gives undue weight to one particular organization's curriculum (who actively engages in lobbying at the federal and state levels) over that of other organizations. Local boards / communities who choose to implement a form of gun safety curriculum should have the ability (and authority) to evaluate multiple options and select the curriculum that best fits the needs of their district and students. That's just good governing and education practice.

In addition, previous studies (two from 2004 for example) have shown that programs like this, which train children what to do after they find an unsecured firearm, aren't effective at discouraging kids from handling unsecured firearms after finding them. School boards and district administrators are looking for curriculum that is proven before implementing it district wide. They certainly wouldn't waste district time and resources on curriculum shown to be ineffective (and declared ineffective by the American Academy of Pediatrics). That's just a waste of taxpayer dollars.

Once again, I thank you all for reviewing my thoughts on this bill, and I encourage you all to demonstrate your commitment to local control and fiscal responsibility by voting no on the passage of HB 2104 out of committee.

February 4, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Jennifer Kay-Higgins

TITLE: Kansas Citizen, Mother, & Educator

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: [choose one]

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104. Mandating the NRA's Eddie Eagle program removes local control from school boards to determine the curriculum that best fits the needs of their student body. School districts that wish to offer a firearm safety program should have the ability to evaluate and determine which curriculum best fits their needs, not forced to use curriculum mandated by the legislature.

In my 25 years as an educator, I've seen the power that local control can have on a community and the need to educate our students in many different ways. When I first started teaching, it was in a tiny, rural community where many of my students hunted with their families to fill their freezers. It was a necessity. The local school board approved a hunter's safety course for our school to allow the students to become certified to hunt in Kansas; it was offered as an elective course during the school day. Our community identified a need and the school board provided the opportunity.

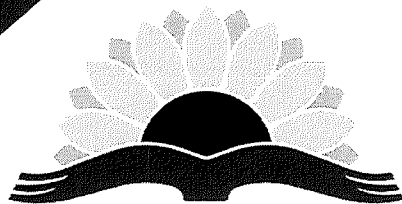
Unfortunately, this bill removes the authority of the elected officers of local school boards to make curriculum decisions. This bill favors a particular lobbyist's program above that of other organizations. Mandating the NRA's Eddie Eagle program removes local control from school boards to determine the curriculum that best fits the needs of their student body. School districts that wish to offer a firearm safety program should have the ability to evaluate and determine which curriculum best fits their needs, not forced to use curriculum mandated by the legislature.

As a concerned Kansas citizen, a mother, and an educator, I ask the committee members to vote no on HB 2104.

Jennifer Kay-Higgins

668 Starlight Dr.

Salina, KS 67401



KANSANS FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

Opponent Written Only Testimony on HB 2104

House Committee on Education

Thursday, February 6, 2025

By Ben Jones

Representative of Kansans for Excellence in Education

Chair Kessler, Vice-Chair Schmoie, Ranking Minority Member Miller and members of the House Federal and State Affairs Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide opposition testimony on HB 2104 on behalf of Kansans for Excellence in Education.

This bill requires that firearm safety standards for students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 8 be based on curriculum written by the National Rifle Association and for students grades 6-12 be based on curriculum written by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

We have several concerns with this legislation.

Article 6 of the State Constitution gives certain powers to the State Board of Education and to local boards of education. The State Board of Education is to develop and approve standards for public K-12 education in Kansas. Local Boards of Education select curriculum and determine how to deliver those standards in their districts. Court decisions as well as Attorneys' General opinions have supported these powers. The legislature dictating standards and specific curriculum oversteps the role of the legislature.

Standards in education are written first then curriculum is bought and or developed to match those standards. As an example, English-Language Arts standard RL.11-12.3 states that high school juniors and seniors will be able to, "analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama." Districts may decide to use Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, William Shakespeare's *Henry V*, or a short story out of the literature textbook the district has purchased. All of

them can be used to fulfill the standard given by the State Board of Education. This bill takes the opposite approach. It uses already printed curriculum and imposes standards based on it. Instead of using curriculum to deliver the standards, it uses curriculum to develop the standards.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 2104.

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Jeanne Koontz

TITLE: Kansas Citizen

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104 as the Eddie Eagle program does not address the adult's responsibility to ensure guns are securely stored, and it removes local control from school boards to determine the curriculum that best fits the needs of their student body.

The Eddie Eagle program focuses on teaching children not to touch guns without permission and to tell an adult if they find one. This puts the responsibility on children, instead of adults. It is the responsibility of adults to ensure guns are securely stored and prevent unauthorized access to guns.

The bill also takes away local control from school boards to make curriculum decisions appropriate for their context and that best fit the needs of their student body. Local school districts should not be forced to use curriculum mandated by the legislature.

I implore you to vote NO on HB 2104.

Jeanne Koontz

Hutchinson, KS

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Melissa Krebs

TITLE: Kansan Citizen, former public school teacher in USD 233 (Olathe)

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104 as this bill does not prohibit the use of actual guns and ammunition during the course. This is dangerous and potentially traumatizing to our children. In addition, school districts that wish to offer a firearm safety program should have the ability to evaluate and determine which curriculum best fits their needs, not be forced to use curriculum mandated by the legislature.

The NRA's Eddie Eagle curriculum is ineffective. Programs like the National Rifle Association's Eddie Eagle merely focus on teaching children not to touch guns without permission and only to tell an adult if they find one. Still, studies have shown that programs like that, which train children what to do after they find an unsecured firearm, are not effective. Two 2004 studies found that the Eddie Eagle program was ineffective in discouraging young children from handling unsecured firearms. One study found that young children who go through a week-long gun safety training are just as likely as children with no training to play with a handgun when they find one. The American Academy of Pediatrics has deemed the Eddie Eagle program ineffective.

Additionally, programs such as the Eddie Eagle curriculum put tremendous pressure on both students and teachers and take away valuable time that could be spent on academics. As a former public school teacher in the state of Kansas, we already spend our time practicing active shooter drills with our students, which already causes many students to worry and stress. I am worried that allowing young students to handle firearms could further traumatize young students, particularly those with sensory issues. School districts and school boards at the local level should be allowed to choose a carefully researched and effective firearm safety program to implement in their schools if they wish to. Our students are already falling behind in areas such as reading and math. We should only take away time from academic learning to implement a program that is proven safe and effective.

I strongly urge you to vote no on HB 2104.

Melissa Krebs

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Megan Langford

TITLE: Kansas Citizen

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

My name is Megan Langford and I am a Lenexa resident and parent of two children in the Shawnee Mission School District. I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104.

I am opposed to the use of the National Rifle Association's "Eddie Eagle" program in our public schools. It has been deemed ineffective by the American Academy of Pediatrics and it has been opposed by the Kansas State Board of Education, Kansas PTA, and Kansas National Education Association. I believe the onus should be on adults to keep firearms safely out of the hands of children. Kids are naturally curious and telling them not to touch a weapon is simply not enough to guarantee their safety. If lawmakers were really interested in protecting our children, they would support programs that put the responsibility on parents to securely store firearms, not on children.

Further, requiring school districts to use this program if they choose to offer gun safety is an example of government overreach. Local school boards know what is best for their districts.

I urge you to oppose this bill and not bring the NRA and Eddie Eagle into our schools.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Megan Langford
Lenexa, KS

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

Alysun Lauck

Kansas Citizen

alysunlauck@gmail.com

HB 2104

OPPONENT

WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104. The Eddie Eagle bill does not address the adult's responsibility to safely store firearms and mandates the NRA's Eddie Eagle program removes local control from school boards to determine the curriculum that best fits the needs of their student body.

As a parent of grade school children, I am concerned that programs like Eddie Eagle merely focus on teaching children not to touch guns without permission and only to tell an adult if they find one, but studies have shown that programs like that are not effective. The Eddie Eagle program is deemed ineffective by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Please consider voting no on HB 2104.

Alysun Lauck

Kansas Citizen, Salina KS 67401

February 6, 2025

Testimony to the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

NAME: Jacqueline Lightcap

TITLE: Kansas citizen

BILL NUMBER: HB 2104

OPPONENT

WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY

Dear Chair Kessler and Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my opposition to HB 2104. Mandating the NRA's Eddie Eagle program removes local control from school boards to determine the curriculum that best fits the needs of their students.

School districts that wish to offer a firearm safety program should have the ability to evaluate and determine which curriculum best fits their students' needs, as they do with curriculum in all other subject areas, instead of being forced to use curriculum mandated by the legislature.

HB 2104 strips control from local school districts, usurping the authority of elected school board members to make these decisions. I urge you to vote No on this bill.

Jacqueline Lightcap

Topeka