

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2104 on behalf of the Kansas State Rifle Association (KSRA). KSRA fully supports the passing of this bill.

My name is Megan Hilbish and I'm from Emporia. I'm currently the KSRA Executive Director and Lobbyist. I'm also a certified firearms instructor and a professional competitive shooter. I have represented the United States of America in the World Championships, and I understand the importance of teaching children firearm safety. I'm also a certified Kansas Hunter Education Instructor and I've taught an Eddie Eagle firearm safety program before.

KSRA and I sincerely believe that firearm safety education is an important subject matter that should be allowed to be taught in Kansas public schools. We understand that it is important how firearm safety education is taught. The wording and perspective that this curriculum is based is also very important. KSRA believes we should use evidence-based firearm safety education curriculum when doing so.

The four main tenants of the Eddie Eagle GunSafe program are: "Stop!," "Don't Touch," "Run Away," and "Tell a Grown-Up." These are excellent and catchy phrases geared towards young children preschool age through fifth grade. "The goal of the Eddie Eagle program is to prevent accidents and keep children safe. According to federal statistics, there are guns in approximately 40% of all U.S. households. Even if you do not have a firearm in your home, chances are that someone you know does. Your child could come in contact with a gun at a neighbor's house, when playing with friends, or under other circumstances outside of your control. We encourage you as a parent and citizen today to visit EddieEagle.com and click on the "grown-up tab." (Eddie Eagle GunSafe brochure)

The principles taught in Kansas Hunter Education firearm safety curriculum is evidence-based and well-researched. Everyone may at some point come across a firearm at some point in their lifetime and he or she will need to know what to safely do. Hunter Education is for persons eleven years old or older in the state of Kansas. It is geared towards teaching adults and teenaged young men and women. I have personally seen how learning basic firearm safety has benefited someone else and it is a valuable life skill.

We urge the Committee to act swiftly to approve HB 2104 and to send it to the full legislature for consideration. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter. I am glad to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Megan Hilbish