Presentation to the House Appropriations Committee Regarding Senate Bill No. 111

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I am in favor of Senate Bill 111. This bill repeals the amendment made to special education funding in 2010 which set limitations on school districts and cooperatives regarding the amount of state aid a district or cooperative could receive based on its percent of excess costs.

Elimination of the verbiage in the 2010 amendment is necessary primarily because the amendment was founded on a faulty assumption. The amendment was based on the assumption that the prevalence of students with disabilities is uniform throughout the state. This is the position adopted by proponents of census-based funding. In Kansas we know that populations of students with disabilities are not randomly or evenly distributed. One only need view the KSDE website to find the prevalence of students with disabilities and how they are distributed throughout the state. This faulty assumption makes financial winners and losers out of districts and cooperatives and unfairly penalizes or rewards districts based on an arbitrary number selected to represent allowable percentages of excess costs. Below, some inequities created by the 2010 amendment are noted by looking at the financial winners and losers if the 2010 amendment is allowed to stand.

Number	County	USD Name	Penalty/Reward	Prevalence of Disabilities
244	Coffey	Burlington Coop	-$108,494	19.98 %
282	Elk	West Elk Coop	-$159,150	23.98 %
619	Sumner	Sumner Cnty Coop	-$113,785	18.51 %
636	Phillips	NorthCentral KS Coop	-$54,744	18.77 %
611	Grant	High Plains Ed Coop	+$145,013	10.69 %
230	Johnson	Spring Hill	+$200,809	9.20 %
232	Johnson	DeSoto	+$124,294	7.08 %
234	Bourbon	Ft. Scott	+ 90,758	9.05 %
480	Seward	Liberal	+$510,471	7.85 %

- All four of the special education entities that would lose money have a high prevalence of students with disabilities.
- All five of the entities that would gain money have a low prevalence of students with disabilities.
- All four of the special education entities that would lose money are cooperatives.

It appears that cooperatives with a high prevalence of students with disabilities would be singled out by the 2010 amendment and financially punished. How would these cooperatives be able to afford to hire the staff to provide the services their students require when money is taken from them and given to districts with low rates of students with disabilities? This seems like an oxymoron. Please support Senate Bill 111. Access to an appropriate education in Kansas should not be based on where a student lives. Furthermore, census-based funding is not the silver bullet for funding special education in Kansas.

Appropriations Committee
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Attachment 6