

## Testimony before the House Education Committee

On HB2718 – Providing authority for a school district to adopt a local activities budget.

February 16, 2012

Chairman and Members of the Education Committee:

A Local Activities Budget passed the Education Budget Committee two years ago and passed this Committee last year. Each year it has changed a little and each year it has come closer to passage. Last year it was even passed by the House's Committee of the Whole, but failed on final action. This current bill, HB2718 has narrowed the focus so that I hope it removes some of the opposition.

To remind us all, a Local Activities Budget is a separate budget voted on by the local community to be used in the local community. In the past this element of the budget was to be applied to any district wishing to use it. This bill differs from that in that it only applies to those school districts that are below the state average of spending per pupil and does not allow any district to use this tax to go above the state average. Also, there is another cap or constraint and that is the amount cannot go beyond three percent of the average amount per pupil, which is currently about \$284. The average spending per pupil in this state is about \$9456.

I will use one of the districts I represent, Blue Valley, to tell you that at \$7111 per pupil, we are currently in the bottom four percent of spending per pupil. If this were to pass with the three percent cap and we voted to use the entire amount, it would raise our spending per pupil to \$7395 which still has us in the bottom ten percent of spending per pupil. It does not get us out of the cellar but helps us a bit.

There is a huge disparity in spending per pupil and this does not correct that, but I hope you will find that this is a little fairer way to operate.

Thanks you for your time and I will be willing to answer any questions that I can.