

SB 424 Proponent Testimony - in person
Senate Education Committee
Creating the office of education inspector general
Dave Trabert - President
March 15, 2018



Chairperson Baumgardner and Members of the Committee,

We appreciate this opportunity to testify in support of SB 424, which would create the office of education inspector general to provide increased accountability, integrity and oversight of elementary and secondary education.

The recent discovery that the Department of Education has illegally ordered \$45 million in transportation funding over the last five years clearly indicates the need for an ongoing independent audit of the Department of Education. To be clear, Legislative Post Audit's discovery of the illegal activity did not result from a comprehensive review; they were only asked to examine transportation funding, which represents only about 1.5 percent of the \$6.472 billion that will be spent on public education this year.

But that's not the only justification. There have been times when the Legislature expressed concern over the Department of Education's guidance on cost predictions (most notably, a \$50 million variance on the cost of equalization funding in 2015); an Inspector General could provide an independent analysis of KSDE guidance upon request. There have also been many documented cases of school districts not complying with statutory requirements to post information in specific manners on their web sites; an Inspector General could monitor district and KSDE compliance with state law and also suggest opportunities to reduce costs without impacting the quality of service.

Accordingly, we encourage the committee to support SB 424 and thank the Members for their consideration.