

Testimony before House Federal and State Affairs

February 19, 2020

House Bill 2385

Thank you Mr. Chairman and Committee.

Ahoj, Dobry den! Vitame Vas! (Hello, Good Day! We Welcome You!)

Jmenuji se Brooklyn Webb. (My Name is Brooklyn Webb)

I am 10 years old and am from Ellsworth Kansas which is just a 15-minute drive from wonderful Wilson Ks! I am currently the Kansas Czech Slovak Princess. While holding this title I have been able to attend numerous Czech Festivals. At any of the festivals I have attended you can find a hall or a church that is playing Polka while all are enjoying a kolache or a plate of dumplings with dill gravy. I always love to grab my Dad Josh or my brother Remy and go out to dance the polka. I have been involved in the Wilson Kansas Czech dance for the last 5 or 6 years under our awesome teacher Paula Svaty! When I started this group, I knew that I was of the Czech heritage but never knew how amazing it would be to learn all of the folk dances like the Polka, Volky, or The Cobbler that has actions and the Polka all in one dance! I have and continue to learn through dance so many wonderful things about the Czech Heritage. As a group we have been lucky enough through our teacher Paula Svaty to also dance at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson for the last 2 years. It's awesome to see so many come and watch us and really learn about the Czech heritage in dance.

The polka has really had an influence on me and really my family. I feel like we are in a way keeping some of that Czech heritage alive through dance. The Polka is such a great and fun way to introduce someone not familiar with Czech Dance as it is the most widely known dance. People usually have heard of it but didn't know the heritage it is attached to and have never danced the dance. I have presented the Polka to my Girl Scouts group as well as in a couple of classes at school and every time I have I will get someone that wants to not only know about it and the Czech heritage but learn the steps and the dance as well. It is a great starting point to get more in depth with the Czech heritage. I have learned so much from my Czech heritage just starting with dance and it has expanded so much. I know where I get my Czech heritage from and also my parentage just by starting out learning the Polka in Czech dancing class.

Dekuji (Thank you)

Mej hezky den (Have a good day!)

I stand for questions.