



Testimony before the

**Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation**

on

**SB 553**

by

**Jerry Henn, Assistant Executive Director - USA-Kansas**

Senator Tyson and members of the Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation

Thank you for the opportunity to give oral testimony before the Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation bill, SB 553. USA Kansas is opposed to SB 553

The Kansas Thrift Savings plan would be enacted with the passage of this plan. This plan would change the retirement plan for teachers once again, not in a positive way.

The facts are clear, KPERS tier 3 is a factor in educators leaving the profession. This particular bill brings more questions than answers. If this bill doesn't improve KPERS 3 retirement it will potentially drive more future educators away from the profession. It is estimated moving from tier 2 to 3 will create a 20%-25% reduction in an educator's retirement fund. Education can not afford to move backward with compensation for educators. Please don't rush through a bill that could have devastating results on the profession. Have comparables been run? A defined benefit retirement compared to a defined contribution are two different retirement streams. This needs to be studied before a plan like this be put in place.

Over the last two months, I listened to testimonies and heard deliberation, by members of the legislature, saying, "educators are asking why they are not being supported by legislators?" So legislators have introduced bills to provide teachers with tax incentives, or supply reimbursements for \$250, last session the legislators even required districts to provide bonus pay from ESSER funds. Yet, by all indications, SB 553 is simply an effort to save money on the backs of educators.

It's a bill such as this, as to why teachers are questioning support from the legislature. Changing retirement plans would not be supporting the future of education in Kansas. It would only add to the discomfort that is coming from the Capitol.