

STATE OF KANSAS

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**SENATE CHAMBER**

**Proponent Testimony for SB 128**

Thank you, Chairwoman Tyson and Committee Members for the opportunity to appear before you today in support of SB 128.

Most Kansans would agree that we want Kansas children to be given a great education. And, we can all agree that different persons learn/grasp things differently. Some learn from reading, some are more visual, while some (like me) learn best by jumping in and doing. This tells us that a one-size-fits-all education/learning does not work.

To be clear, The Ad Astra Opportunity Tax Credit (SB 128) is not a voucher program, but it provides parents with greater flexibility in determining how/where their children learn best.

As a product of a private school and a parent who chose to send his children to a public school, I believe I have a different perspective than many. I would not be the person I am today if it were not for my time at FSCH. And my children would not be who they are were it not for the time my wife and I spent at FSCH.

I've heard it said that private schools only take good students and they don't have to meet the same mandates as public schools. The latter may be true, but the former is not. We had students at our school who were kicked out (expelled) from public schools. Sometimes the strict discipline and rules of the private school worked well for the troubled student - and sometimes it did not.

Why might parents choose to make the sacrifice to put their children in a private school or make the even bigger commitment of choosing to home educate?

Some reasons parents might choose private school or home education: their children aren't succeeding (just not getting it) in the current school; a child may have an illness, handicap, an emotional disorder; the child was bullied; they oppose the teaching of evolution; they don't want a boy (male) in their daughter's restroom or locker room; negative peer pressure; foul language of teachers or other students; smoking or vaping in the restrooms; travel distance to get to the school; objectionable books in the school library; teaching the woke, liberal agenda; they oppose contraceptives being handed out; lack of structure or discipline in the classroom.

I fully understand that not all public schools face all these issues every day. But some do. I realize that some people think these things don't matter. But to many, they do.

Is there something wrong with parents choosing where and how their children get a formal education?

Keep in mind, these parents will still be paying property taxes and sales taxes that go to public education.

Simply stated, The Ad Astra Opportunity Tax Credit will empower more parents, especially the economically challenged, to provide the best opportunity for their children to receive the education they need and deserve.

I ask the Committee to recommend SB 128 favorably for passage.

I'm happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.