

February 9, 2023

Testimony to the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee

NAME: Deborah Kitchin

TITLE: Kansas Citizen and parent of 2022 Graduate of Blue Valley School District

EMAIL ADDRESS: dmkitchin@yahoo.com

BILL NUMBER: SB 128, Opportunity Tax Credit

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY

Dear Chair & members of the committee,

I am writing to voice my opposition to bill SB 128.

I am a parent of a 2022 graduate of Blue Valley schools and a taxpayer. I value public schools because they provide my son with the education he needed to continue on to further academic levels. My son has a disability and benefited greatly from the services defined in his IEP provided and provided by excellent teachers and special educators. Even though I no longer have a school-age child, I believe students coming behind my son deserve the same or better help. The private schools could not accommodate him. Instead of funding private schools, the legislature should focus on fully funding special education, which currently has a shortfall of \$160 million.

This bill provides benefits to the wealthy who can already afford to send their kids to private schools. There are no income limitations, and multiple tax credits are allowed for multiple kids. It leaves out those who need to support the most. Public tax dollars should remain with our public schools that accept and educate all children. EVERYONE in Kansas should pay taxes to our state so that our state can provide the services needed for EVERYONE.

In addition, this would be a VERY expensive program. 26,000 students are currently enrolled in accredited private schools. For those students alone, this program will cost the state \$132 million. Our state can not afford that. Based on census data, there are another 30,000 school-aged children in Kansas not attending a public school or an accredited private school, potentially adding another \$153 million.

Please vote no on bill SB 128.

Deborah Kitchin

Leawood, Ks