

Proponent Testimony of SB #13
For the Senate Education Committee
January 17, 2023
Dustin Bell
Parent of Student Athletes

Chair Baumgardner and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony in support of Senate Bill #13 on behalf of not only my student athletes, but all student athletes, the parents and families of student athletes, and all of those who are trying to promote student athletes through broadcasting.

Hello, my name is Dustin Bell. I live in Hoxie, Kansas, where my wife and I raise our eight children. We are a blended family as I have 3 boys and 1 girl and my wife has 3 girls and 1 boy. We are the modern-day Brady Bunch! We love Kansas and the opportunities that we've had, not only growing up in western Kansas, but raising our family here as well. I work for Taylor Implement Company in sales and my wife is an RN at the local hospital. All our children are involved in sports and know the benefits of competing. I have a son that is a 3-time State champion in wrestling, and is now wrestling for Fort Hays State, and my other two sons are doing very well in the program here at Hoxie as well. My daughter is a KS Kids State wrestling champion. We are also very involved with football, volleyball, golf and track. I'm reaching out to you today to express our concerns and disappointment in the fact that we have not been allowed to watch our kids' sporting events due to NFHS not allowing other broadcasters to represent our kids. Open Spaces Sports is a local, broadcasting business that goes to all of our kids' high school athletic events and knows all of our kids personally. Open Spaces Sports broadcasts our kids with unmatched excitement and statistics that really represent our community well. They truly promote our kids' athletics by talking about each one personally on air and emphasizing all of their accomplishments. Our local businesses pay for sponsorships that then allow anybody who wants to watch the broadcast, live, to do so at no charge. This is such a huge benefit not only to us parents that cannot be everywhere at once, but also to our family and friends who can't be there in person. Many elderly fans in the area rely on Open Spaces Sports to watch these student athletes, whom we love so much. One recent example of our frustration is a wrestling tournament in Dodge City that took place January 7, 2023. NFHS actually had a contract with the school to broadcast but was not present to do so...at all. Open Spaces Sports' broadcasters were there and still not allowed to show video, due to NFHS. If those who allow this to happen truly believe in promoting competition, then I feel that they should allow other businesses such as Open Spaces Sports to freely cover all of our student athletes as well. Remember, competition isn't only good for athletics. Competition is good for business too. Competition holds all of us at a higher standard. Please support us in getting the necessary changes implemented so these kids can be supported and enjoyed by all of us that love them. As a resident, taxpayer, and advocate of Kansas, I appreciate all you do. Thank you.