

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Education
Opponent for HB2238 March 6, 2023**

As a Christian, I strongly oppose HB 2238 because I believe that all children deserve love, acceptance, and the support of their families and communities. The proposed legislation undermines the basic human rights of transgender youth by depriving them of the opportunity to fully participate in their school community, and by shaming them for their identities. Its very existence increases the risk of bullying, regardless of whether a student chooses to play a sport, by making it clear that it is acceptable to exclude a child from society because of who they are.

HB2238 is also unnecessary. The number of transgender athletes in the state of Kansas is incredibly small and there is no data to suggest that transgender athletes are winning athletic competitions at the high school level on a regular basis. I have worked as a score keeper at many high school sports games and I can guarantee you that high school girls do not require your protection. They are more than capable of playing in, and winning, sports competitions on their own.

As a teacher, I also believe that HB2238 directly attacks the physical and mental well-being of transgender youth. If passed, it will erode the trust that students have in their teachers and coaches by making it that much harder for adults in schools to be Allies to these children. This trust can mean the difference between life and death. It protects transgender students, many of whom do not have the support of their families, by giving them an adult mentor to whom they can turn for help and understanding. If these pivotal relationships are undermined by the proposed legislation, the results will be deadly.

The Kansas legislator should not be endangering its citizens, it should be protecting them. I ask that you protect our children by opposing HB2238.

Thank you,
Gretchen Meyer