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KANSAS NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION / 715 SW 10TH AVENUE / TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1686

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House Bill 2466  
House Committee on Education  
February 1, 2022

Chairman Huebert, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition of House Bill 2466.

It is our understanding that this bill will be amended in committee to remove the language related to establishing a graduation requirement. While we do believe that is an improvement, we still stand in opposition to it.

We are well aware of how much new technology has exploded in recent years. The youth of today have more computing power on a phone in their pockets than most could have imagined even a decade ago. Students of today are heading straight into a workforce unlike any one of us have ever known, and we agree that we must be making every effort to prepare them for success. This includes giving them the opportunity to take computer science courses. For many Kansas students, they already have those opportunities without mandates from a governing body that lacks the constitutional authority to make such mandates. Some even have the ability to take these courses prior to entering high school.

Furthermore, school districts across the state already face teacher shortages for the most fundamental of subjects. Enrollment in education programs have dropped significantly over the years and remain historically low. How will we fill this specialty teaching position?

We applaud the effort to invest \$2 million in professional development and scholarships for future teachers. However, we don't believe it will be enough. As rapidly as the field evolves, teachers would need continuous professional development to stay abreast of the most current trends, and materials and equipment would need regular updating to remain relevant. Learning on obsolete technology is not beneficial. It is our understanding that similar efforts in other states are investing \$15 million to \$20 million, or more.

Although we believe computer science classes are important, we would urge the committee to have the confidence as we do in the State Board of Education – who has the constitutional duty and authority – in determining curriculum requirements for school districts. How those requirements are applied within a curriculum and the specific courses to be offered is then best left to the local decision-making level.