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Written Testimony to House Taxation Committee in opposition to HB 2421
Honorable Chair, Rep. Adam Smith
Committee Assistant: Lea Gerard 785-296-4830
Lea.Gerard@House.ks.gov
Room 346-S, State Capitol Building

Chair Smith and Members of the Committee:

Stand Up Blue Valley: Families for Our Schools is a parent and patron advocacy group in the Blue Valley School District. We advocate for legislation that supports Blue Valley Schools and work to help our community understand the importance of their votes to our schools.

Stand Up Blue Valley: Families for Our Schools Opposes House Bill 2421.

Now is not the time to make changes to the tax code that would result in drastic loss of revenue that would adversely affect Kansas public schools. The Legislature only recently passed legislation bringing school funding up to adequate levels. Clearly, this important commitment to the future of our children must be funded, or the legislature's hard work at a constitutional funding formula would have been wasted.

A large percentage of Blue Valley Schools' operating revenue comes directly from the state general fund. Staff salaries make up over 80% of the operating budget of Blue Valley Schools. A loss of operating revenue would result in cuts to critical staff positions including classroom teachers - resulting in increased class sizes, school nurses - resulting in lack of support for medically vulnerable students, counselors and school psychologists - causing a decrease in mental health supports, and custodial staff - decreasing the ability to keep schools healthy and clean. Between this year and next year, Blue Valley Schools will cut 87 staff positions - almost all paras and teachers. Blue

Valley Schools has already responded to significant budget deficits in this current year and next year, and has made cuts, reallocations, and raised fees. Read more about the budget here: <https://www.bluevalleyk12.org/budget>. Any additional revenue cuts will have to come from staff and *will* affect the quality of our kids' education.

We saw what happened when the legislature hastily passed massive tax cuts were several years ago - they then had to pass a huge sales tax increase to generate enough revenue to operate, in addition to cutting services, delaying KPERs payments, and stealing money from KDOT that will never be repaid. Our Blue Valley teachers and support staff went years without a significant wage increase, along with thousands of other state employees. Scheduled payments from the state to Blue Valley to pay employee salaries were late more than once, forcing the district to use reserve funds to pay employees on schedule. These results are unacceptable and preventable. This mistake should not be repeated.

Stand Up Blue Valley opposes any tax plan that would result in sudden, drastic loss of revenue, without a plan to replace the lost revenue. The result would be harmful to the education of our Blue Valley students. We ask you to vote NO on HB 2421.

Sincerely,

Patty Logan, M.D.

Chair - Stand Up Blue Valley: Families for Our Schools