

February 1, 2024

Testimony to the House K-12 Education Budget Committee

NAME: **Leslie D. Mark**

TITLE: **Kansas Citizen / Voter**

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BILL NUMBER: **HB2612, *Requiring School Districts to be in Compliance with All State Laws and Rules and Regulations to be Accredited and Requiring the State Board of Education to Establish a Process to Challenge Determinations of Such Compliance.***

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: **Opponent**

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: **Written Only**

Dear Chair Williams & Members of the Committee,

I write to voice opposition to HB 2612, a bill threatening only public schools' accreditation in Kansas — holding them to a different standard and dividing criteria used for public and private education. This bill is striking in its bold attempt to remove accreditation from any public school while disenfranchising the elected KS Board of Education.

Once the KS Legislature were to introduce any legislation banning the teaching of "true history," one can recognize the harm this kind of legislation would do to bright young Kansans poised on a college track. If their high school isn't accredited when they apply to college, they could be denied admission through no fault of theirs.

KS Leg and this Committee are well aware that Article 6 of the Kansas Constitution establishes a State Board of Education, all of which members are elected from districts about twelve times the size of each of yours. Every public school in Kansas is required to participate in the state's accreditation process which, again, is by law the purview of the Kansas State Board of Education. It is not the purview of the Kansas Policy Institute and extremist partisans who do not possess the best interests of ALL Kansas students.

Stresses of the 21st century are taking a toll on Kansas — from a fractured polity to traditional businesses, to our communities, families, and schools in every county. All of us see the expanding challenges ahead. The future of Kansas, however, will beam brightly if we choose to remain committed to quality public education. We should be focused on creating learning opportunities accessible to all Kansas students so that they, in turn, can help right the ship of future KS Leg!

Vote NO on HB2612.

Leslie D. Mark

Mission Hills, HD 25 / Sen 7