

March 6, 2013

Testimony for the House Education Committee

Re: Common Core Curriculum in Kansas

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My years as a mother and educator bring my interest to this issue of who should determine the content of curriculum in our state's public schools. Your action towards this critical question will be used in shaping the future of our most precious resource; our children.

Should Kansas take the initial steps to turn control of what our teachers teach and our textbooks' content to the federal government? Is it wise and judicious to leave the basic task of determining how our children are to be educated to those who have little understanding of our fundamental values and way of life here in Kansas? What does our U.S. Constitution have to say about the federal government's role in education?

Loss of local control has always been a clarion call for all Kansans as I have participated in public life for the last 20 years. Here in Kansas, yes we proudly cling to our guns and our Bibles and in addition; our local control. If we capitulate to the federal government, embrace the Common Core Curriculum, parents, the most basic form of local control, will no longer have any say as to what philosophy on which their children's education will be based. Is that what public officials in Kansas wish to accomplish, drive parents involvement in their children's school from meaningful participation to simply window dressing with all major decisions of curriculum to be made in Washington D.C.?

Back to the question of our U.S. Constitution and the role of our federal government in education; the answer, it is mute. Education is not an enumerated power, therefore a reserved power for the states. How dare we turn our back on our Founding Fathers wisdom of separation of powers, a structure of government to keep us safe from government. If we, through the actions of our elected officials, cannot find the courage and fortitude to say to the federal government, no thanks, we don't need your help and we will honor the Constitution of the United States by maintaining and building on the protection of the wonderful gift of separation of powers; then why don't we simply shut our state government down and tell the feds, come on in we're incapable of governing ourselves and must be dictated to and governed by Washington.

As a small business woman and citizen of this great nation, I agree with President Ronald Reagan's choice of the most terrifying nine words in the English language, "I'm from the government and I'm here to help". Take heed to President's Reagan's simple words wisdom and the enduring wisdom of our Founding Father's

framework of separation of powers; just say no to Common Core Curriculum and re-establish the responsibility given to us by our U.S. Constitution in all areas of government, beginning with this small step in the reclamation of local control in education.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion on this extremely important issue.

Charlotte O'Hara