

Testimony before the
House Appropriations Committee
in support of
House Bill 2148 – Transparency

by
Judith Deedy, Executive Director of **Game On for Kansas Schools**
grassroots advocacy organization, 501c4

February 13, 2015

Mr. Chair, Members of the Committee:

[Game on for Kansas Schools](#) is a nonpartisan grassroots effort among Kansans who share a belief in high-quality public education as a right of all Kansas students. We advocate for Kansas public schools to ensure our teachers, principals, superintendents, and school board members all have the resources necessary to deliver quality education to all Kansas students. We inform the community about issues and legislation affecting students in Kansas. The Game On leadership team currently includes over 30 members, representing the spectrum of education stakeholders (parents, educators, and other community advocates), with children attending more than 25 different Kansas public schools. We are nonpartisan and welcome anyone interested in protecting Kansas public education. Our efforts include raising awareness, evaluating policy, accountability, public discourse, and contributing solutions where real problems exist.

We support House Bill 2148 as a way to increase citizen awareness of and participation in the matters before the legislature. This testimony is being submitted in written form only because we have a great deal of difficulty getting people who can travel to Topeka to testify. This is precisely the reason we support adoption of this bill. Many of the people who make up our leadership group and our broader membership are parents with school-age and preschool-age children and educators. Most education committee meetings are held at around 1:30 in the afternoon. There have been multiple occasions when many of us would like to hear what is going on in these meetings, but we have been unable to do so while still meeting our obligations to our families, or our jobs. In addition to allowing for the time of the actual hearing, Kansans living outside of Topeka also have to allow for the time it takes to travel to the Capitol. Most days we cannot participate in hearings in Topeka without failing to meet our obligations to our children whether it's teaching them in the classroom, volunteering in their schools, putting them down for naps, or taking care of them when they get home from school. Twitter accounts and newspaper stories do not give a full account of what happens in these meetings. Votes are also often not recorded in committee meetings, but constituents are entitled to know how their legislators are voting. As we have learned, much of the real work of the legislature occurs in committee meetings, and our legislators should be working to make these proceedings open to the citizens of Kansas.

We urge you to support House Bill 2148.

Respectfully submitted,

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