

Tom Bruno

3965 SW King Arthur's Rd
Topeka, KS 66610
kslobby@cox.net

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Chairman Ralph Ostmeyer and members of the Senate Federal & State Affairs Committee:

Senators:

Thank you for the opportunity to briefly present testimony regarding HB 2468, which would prevent Kansas local Boards of Education from making decisions on facility usage in the best interest of their respective districts.

I am the At-Large Board of Education Member for Auburn-Washburn, USD 437, here in Shawnee County. I am appearing today for myself and not representing the board.

The bill, as passed the House, would prevent local districts from determining their own facility usage policies, and that is of concern. USD 437 has facility use policies in place to allow members of the taxpaying public the opportunity to use the facilities they pay for through their tax dollars, at the same time the board has created use policies that are in place to protect the investment taxpayers have made in those same facilities. As an example, our district does not let non-school baseball, softball, or soccer teams practice in our gyms. That policy is in place to prevent possible damage to the facility and require additional spending for any additional repair or maintenance. I don't believe the Legislature wants to get into deciding what local districts decide is appropriate use for their facilities.

As fate would have it, USD 437's Airforce Jr. ROTC program came to our board meeting on March 21, 2016, to request starting an air rifle team. They have a plan to use an older building the district uses for storage and have secured grant funding and are doing fundraising to get the necessary supplies for the team. Since that activity is currently allowed under state law under K.S.A. 72-89a02, I fully support the request.

Thank you for your time and consideration and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Tom Bruno