



MainStream Coalition
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Testimony to House Committee on K-12 Education Budget
Chair, Rep. Kristey Williams
Hearing: Thursday, February 14, 2019

Position – OPPOSE HB 2150

Chairwoman Williams, and Members of the Committee,

The MainStream Coalition opposes passage of HB 2150, as one more attempt to shift tax money to private or parochial schools and undermine the quality of public education in Kansas. Under the guise of anti-bullying, proponents would allow public funds to be diverted to private businesses that do not face the same scrutiny, requirements, or oversight as public schools. The mandate that public schools educate all children is one of the foundations of our democracy, and any legislation which destabilizes the funding of public schools is a *de facto* attack on our democracy.

House Bill 2150 does not do anything to lessen the likelihood of bullying in any setting, nor does it provide for any mechanisms to assist schools in supporting students who have been bullied. In addition to its inefficacy as anti-bullying legislation, this bill violates the separation of church and state, one of the founding principles of the MainStream Coalition. Using public money to send children to religious schools violates a core concept of our Constitution. Taxpayers should not pay for religious education.

We strongly support efforts to reduce bullying in our schools. We urge the Legislature to fully fund public education, to ensure the availability of social services to students and their families, and to work with our excellent public teachers and administrators to support existing anti-bullying programs.

Please oppose HB 2150, and instead turn your attention to supporting our public schools in all the ways they support Kansas children.

Thank you,

Liz Meitl
Member of the Board of Directors of the MainStream Coalition

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About MainStream

Founded in 1993, the MainStream Coalition is an advocacy group for moderate political views regardless of party. Our members do more than vote.