



Date of Testimony: March 18, 2019

Bill Number: SB 142

Testimony by: Megan Peters, Chair - Education First Shawnee Mission

In Support Testimony: Written Only

Dear Chair Representative Williams and Members of the House K-12 Education Budget Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding SB 142, which includes appropriations for the department of education for FY 2020 and FY 2021 in response to litigation by increasing BASE aid for certain school years. On behalf of Education First Shawnee Mission, I am writing to voice **my support for SB 142**. EFSM is a parent-led, volunteer, education advocacy group in Shawnee Mission, and our group is comprised of members from all over our diverse school district. The Shawnee Mission School District is the third largest school district in Kansas, with more than 27,000 students and 4,300 employees, in an area spanning 14 municipalities. At EFSM, we care deeply about protecting the value of our community's number one asset by advocating for fully-funded, excellent public schools.

EFSM supports funding for inflation based on the CPI Index during the phase-in of the Gannon funding plan, which was passed by the Kansas Legislature in the last session. Funding for inflation is needed in order to meet the Supreme Court's 2017 ruling and end the cycle of litigation that has plagued the state for far too long. In the Shawnee Mission School District, we have experienced the failure of the legislature to fully fund our schools firsthand. From increased class sizes to cuts to programs and loss of staff, our children have paid the price. SB 142 increases BASE aid per student, supports Special Education funding, supports local school board control, and meets recommendations by the Kansas Department of Education.

We regret that this committee has once again given constituents incredibly short notice to provide input on such an important bill. As when we testified earlier this week against HB 2395, we want to encourage members of the K-12 Education Budget Committee to commit to transparency in governance. We understand school funding is a complex issue, and we appreciate the work done so far to avoid the mistakes of the past.

**As a parent, education advocate, and a Kansan, I support SB 142 and I ask you to support this bill as well.** Let's move forward and provide our children and our schools with the best opportunities possible to compete in a global economy.

Regards,  
Megan Peters  
Parent and Chair, Education First Shawnee Mission  
Overland Park, Kansas  
educationfirstshawneemission@gmail.com