

**Testimony from Monica Lillis Salmon, proponent for HB2621  
February 16, 2022**

This Bill would directly affect a child who was dismissed this school year from Kansas School for the Deaf for the reason of gaining access to hearing.

My name is Monica. I have known Anje her entire life.

At birth, she had three new born hearing screening tests. The first two indicated that she was deaf. The third gave a "hearing" result. It became obvious over Anje's first year that she could NOT hear. She was very engaged watching the world around her, but she did not respond to clapping noises, singing, or even fireworks.

At age one, hearing tests determined that Anje was profoundly deaf. She was a frustrated and angry toddler. Hearing aids did not help her to share in an oral language. Videos and ASL tutors were not giving us the ASL language that we needed.

When Anje arrived at KSD at age 3, she found the world she had been missing. Anje found a world where people used their hands to speak. Anje shared her language with her family, friends, and even her dolls. Anje was no longer angry for lack of a language. She became the happy child we know today, signing her every thought and desire. KSD gave Anje a language – American Sign Language.

KSD not only gave Anje a language, they helped her share her language with family. As part of her household I was also allowed to attend evening ASL classes at KSD, and even the summer ASL family immersion camp. The teachers and instructors at KSD are wonderful. The deaf community has been so welcoming. Every family at KSD has a unique story. I love how we all come together for love of our children.

I am grateful for the lessons that I received from KSD. Without KSD, I would not be able to converse with this child that I love so much.

Thank you for remembering to consider that this legislation touches the life of little girl.