

February 4, 2021

Written Testimony to House K-12 Education Budget Committee

NAME: Megan Langford

TITLE:

EMAIL ADDRESS: Langford.Megan@gmail.com

CITY: Lenexa, Shawnee Mission School District

BILL NUMBER: HB 2119

BILL DESCRIPTION: Creating the student empowerment act; providing education savings accounts for students who are academically at risk

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Oppose House Bill 2119 – Education Savings Accounts

ORAL TESTIMONY OR WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY: written testimony only

Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide remote testimony on HB 2119 education savings account bill. As a public-school advocate and parent in the Shawnee Mission School District, I am opposed to this and similar voucher-type programs. I do not support using our public-tax dollars for private school tuition. This could cost the SMSD millions of dollars in lost funding, an especially difficult pill to swallow after Kansas schools lost more Federal Title I funding than any other state in 2019, and Shawnee Mission School District lost over \$1 million in Title I funding which led to the elimination of Title I status for 5 of 13 Title I schools in our district. Having fewer Title I schools meant the District received fewer emergency funds from the CARES Act, and our schools and teachers have had to do more with less, all in the face of a devastating pandemic.

Additionally, I oppose this bill because voucher-type programs are not required to serve all students. Public dollars should be used to benefit every Kansas child, regardless of educational needs or other characteristics. Private schools are not required to make special accommodations for students with disabilities beyond the school's typical instructional services offered to all students, and parents waive their right to an IEP upon admission. In effect, this means that private schools are choosing their students, rather than families choosing the school.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to vote NO on HB 2119.

Megan Langford

Lenexa, KS