

February 9, 2023

Testimony to the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee

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BILL NUMBER: SB 128, Opportunity Tax Credit

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written Only

Dear Chair & members of the committee,

I am writing to voice my opposition to bill SB 128.

I attended private schools K-12, and started my kids at private school as well. I have three sons. Two of them have attended both private and public school. My youngest has only attended public school. The private school my children attended prior to switching to Maize USD 266 could not meet their academic or mental health needs, nor were they required to by law. Public education has absolutely been the answer for my kids. If parents receive tax refunds to pay for their kids to attend private schools (that do not have to meet standards), kids attending public school will suffer greatly. At a time when special education is not fully funded, the legislature's focus should be on fully funding public education, not diverting funds to pay for private schools. Considering 26,000 students are currently enrolled in accredited private schools, for those students alone, this program will cost the state \$132 million. Kids attending rural schools will also suffer. There are not private school options for them, and their only option for school will not receive the funds it needs to educate our many kids living in rural Kansas. Having attended private school myself, and having sent kids to private schools, I know some of the benefits they have. However, I firmly believe they should not be tax payer funded. Good public schools increase the value of our properties. If our public schools suffer, our home values will suffer as well. And no Kansans want that.

In closing I ask you to vote no on bill SB 128.

Sara Askew
Wichita