

January 31, 2022

Written Testimony to House K-12 Education Budget Committee

NAME: Anita Parsa

TITLE: Parent of three children who attended Catholic schools
K-12

EMAIL ADDRESS: akparsa@me.com

CITY: Mission Hills

BILL NUMBER: HB 2550

BILL DESCRIPTION: Creating education savings accounts

PROPOSER, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL TESTIMONY OR WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY:

Written testimony only

Dear Chairman & members of the committee,

My husband and I made the choice to send our three children to Catholic schools from Kindergarten through the end of high school despite the excellent public school system in Johnson

County. They all attended St. Ann Catholic School in Prairie Village, Kansas from kindergarten through 8th grade, then shifted to a combination of Rockhurst High School, St. Teresa's Academy, and Notre Dame de Sion High School. I am writing to voice my opposition to bill HB 2550.

Voucher programs and student savings accounts such as HB 2550 are often referred to using the misnomer "school choice programs". They should be called "Funding Private School with Public Dollars" programs, as all they do is shift funds away from the public education system that every taxpaying Kansan helps fund. We ALL properly fund the public schools, whether we use them or not, because good public school systems are critical to our success as in our neighborhoods, in our cities, as a state.

We taxpayers - single people, childless people, the parents of newborn & toddlers, those whose parents have grown - some who use the public school systems and many who do not, all pay

for the schools both because it enhances our communities and our property values and because it is our public duty. Not using the public school system is not a good argument for getting your portion back. There's no logical way to make that claim but say retirees, those whose children are grown or tiny, those with no children, etc. do not have a similarly valid argument that they should not need to pay for public education. It's outrageous to claim that because you opt for a different choice, you alone should be exempt from all or part paying for the public option.

My father, a tax accountant who lived his entire life in Kansas, used to say that it was our patriotic duty to pay every dime of taxes we owed (but not a penny more). He viewed this as taking responsibility and making a commitment to our town, county, state and nation.

As legislators, you have the duty to ensure that our state-provided schools are the best they can be given the tax dollars available. That is no easy task, but it becomes impossible if

those who opt out of the system don't have to pay along with everyone else.

I ask that you oppose bill HB2550.

Thank you for your consideration,

Anita Parsa