



**Testimony Senate Bill 31
Kansas Senate Standing Committee on Commerce
Submitted Testimony
February 6, 2013**

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My name is Garry Sigle and I am the Executive Director of the Kansas Association of American Educators, otherwise known as KANAAE. KANAAE is a statewide, non-union educators' organization and I am submitting this testimony in firm support of SB 31.

- This law would ensure that teachers and education employees are not paying for political activity they are not aware of or do not support.
- It empowers teachers and other education employees to make financial decisions that best fit their budget and beliefs for any reason.
- It provides teacher and education employees with added protections of understanding how their membership dues are used. It doesn't make sense to utilize a taxpayer-funded payroll deduction service for the purposes of partisan political activity.

We believe it is only logical and fair to allow teachers and other education employees to understand where their union dues are going. As a non-union organization, KANAAE was established, at least in part, by the fact that teachers were frustrated with their money going to partisan political causes or candidates. This legislation would allow teachers to make conscious decisions about where their hard-earned dollars are going. No educator should fund causes or candidates without their direct consent, period.

The impact of this bill is significant. As part of my position with KANAAE, I speak with teachers that are unaware that their union dues are going to political activity. The fact that union dues go to more than just benefits and services is not widely known. Under paycheck protection, educators would be empowered with the information to make their own decisions. This legislation promotes fairness and transparency with all organizations.

Furthermore, educators are often provided misinformation or experience intimidation when questioning what their union dues are funding. This legislation frees school districts and administrators by providing educators with accurate information. Paycheck protection laws also increase fiscal transparency and accountability on the part of associations, both of which are imperative to teacher freedom.

To address some of the arguments of opponents of the initiative, it's been said that this legislation would curb union power. On the contrary, this is not a bill designed to eliminate unions. Rather it provides educators the ability to protect themselves from financially supporting political candidates they otherwise wouldn't support. The unions will be held accountable to members.

In closing, KANAAE urges you to vote in favor of SB 31 and show your support for the paychecks of all of Kansas' teachers. Thank you.

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