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House Committee on K-12 Education Budget
Committee Assistant: Holly Broxterman
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Re: HB 2550
OPPONENT testimony - written only

Chair Williams and members of the committee:

I oppose this bill for many reasons, mainly because it diverts taxpayer funds from our public schools to private schools. Private schools do not have the same accountability standards or resources to educate all students as public schools. They get to pick and choose their students, often weeding out those who have special needs and need extra attention and expensive resources to develop, thrive and achieve their highest potentials.

Our autistic child was rejected in kindergarten by a Kansas-located private school and nourished in the Olathe Public Schools. She is now a college student. My wife is a veteran Orchestra Director in Olathe Public Schools, bringing instrumental music and cultural enrichment to students in here economically disadvantaged school population. Our child and these children would never have an opportunity to be exposed to classical music, theory, the intellectual advantages of learning music, and grow to their potentials if their educational resources were diverted to private schools. They would receive diminished basic education resources and opportunities as well.

I am an economist by formal education. Additionally, this bill is unfair to Kansas taxpayers and would create a two-tier education system that may benefit some students while hurting the majority of students. Tax dollars are Kansans' dollars. They are paid by the public to fund public goods. Public education is a public good. Private education is a private interest. Those who seek private education remain free to do so. We have a collective and legal obligation to fund public education, not private schools. There exist no validity in shifting public education dollars to funding private education.

Sincerely,
Nolan H. Goldberg
Private Citizen