



**MainStream Coalition**  
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Testimony to Senate Select Committee on Education Finance  
Chair, Sen. Jim Denning  
Hearings: May 18-19, 2017

### **Position – OPPOSE SB 251**

Chairman Denning, and Members of the Committee,

The MainStream Coalition urges the committee to reconsider SB 251, in light of the Kansas Supreme Court’s decision in *Gannon*.

Kansas has endured a decade or more of education finance litigation. A generation of Kansas children have been failed by the Kansas Legislature’s insistence on underfunding their future. This is clear from the Court’s decision, focusing on the 25% of Kansas children who do not reach benchmarks. It is time to fund early childhood efforts, to provide counselors and social workers for our children, to retain and attract high quality teachers with good pay and administrative support, to provide opportunities for EVERY Kansas child.

But this is not accomplished by underfunding education once more. Every advocate, every district, even the state’s own Department of Education, all have estimated the cost of adequate funding to be well above the level set in SB 251. An extended process for approval of this bill—to both Chambers, to the Governor, then to the Court, only to be sent back—will only diminish the ability of our districts to best serve Kansas children.

Kansans have told you, repeatedly, that we are willing to invest in the children of our state. Don’t let us down. Fund Kansas public education at a suitable level now. It is time.

Thank you for your attention,

Brandi Fisher,  
Executive Director, MainStream Coalition

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#### **About MainStream**

Founded in 1993, the MainStream Coalition is an advocacy group for moderate political views regardless of party. Our members do more than vote.