Terry Forsyth, Testimony
HB 2329
House Financial Institutions and Pensions Committee
Wednesday, March 13, 2019

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, my name is Terry Forsyth and I represent the Kansas National Education Association. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify today in opposition to HB 2329.

Our understanding is that HB 2329 would increase KPERS school members employee contributions from the current level of 6.0% to 7.15% and dedicate that increase towards reducing the Unfunded Actuarial Liability of the KPERS State-School group. In addition, the bill would also provide for funding to be provided to local school districts to provide for a corresponding salary increase in order to offset the higher employee contributions.

We would encourage the committee to consider that with the passage of SB 9 which completes the repayment of the KPERS contribution skipped by previous legislatures, that for the first time in 25 years the actuarial required contribution has been made to KPERS.

We thank the legislature for providing the funding in SB 9 and encourage the legislature stay the course going forward and not complicate the issue of KPERS funding with the two-step process described in this bill.

Secondly, we have a concern about the role and responsibility of local school boards, not the Legislature, to determine salaries for their respective KPERS school employees. This bill would seem to circumvent the fundamental concept of local control and therefore the authority of locally elected school boards.

Lastly the bill does not follow current legal standings in that if a KPERS member is asked to increase their contribution there must likewise be an increase in their benefits.

We would ask the committee not to pass this bill thereby keeping the KPERS Funding Process from further complications.