



Testimony before the
House Education Committee
on
HB 2301
by

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Testimony provided on behalf of the USA-Kansas and KASB

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to address the committee.

Our organizations stand opposed to HB 2301.

In Kansas we are fortunate to have publicly elected officials to support the needs of Kansans. Having local, county, and state elected officials allows for more direct support of the individual values, conditions, and growing expectations for all Kansans. When one elected body begins to stand in the path or direct another elected body, we begin to see an erosion of power and lack of trust, even for the best reasons. We believe HB 2301 does precisely that. It's an attempt to erode the Kansas State Board of Education's authority and may break the trust of local boards of education.

Although the idea behind HB 2301 may be well-intended, this bill will have unintended consequences that will directly affect students and school districts. Personal Finance is not a curriculum unfamiliar to Kansas schools. This curriculum may look similar, but it is taught in a variety of ways across our school districts. For some, it's layered across math, business, and family & consumer science classes. For others, personal finance is a stand-alone class offered to high school students as an elected class or paired with other topics for mathematics credit. For few districts, it may be already be an established graduation requirement, much like health or government classes.

Without reliable information, the legislature should ask for clarification from the State Board of Education on how the personal finance curriculum is impacting students. From an outsider's view, changing classes or graduation requirements might seem like a simple process. In reality, schools have several elements to consider, such as current graduation requirements, class

offerings, schedule availabilities, local norms, staffing, implementation, and effects on student schedules. For many of our smaller districts, adding a requirement such as personal finance could cause the elimination of another class or changing the curriculum of multiple courses.

We encourage you to vote no on moving this bill out of committee. If the concern remains about the value of a personal finance course, we believe working together with the Kansas Department of Education and to ask for clarification so we can discover how everyone can work together to build a path to success.