

March 5, 2024

Dear Chairman Carpenter, Committee members, and staff,

I am a teacher, Kansas resident for nearly 40 years, and faithful voter. I am writing in strong opposition of HB 2803, a dangerous gun bill that could have disastrous consequences for our state as it seeks to prohibit “the commandeering of state resources to enforce federal gun control.” As a mother and teacher, I expect that our highest priority would be to protect the safety of our communities, especially children, not to shield those who are breaking federal gun laws.

HB 2803 would get in the way of law enforcement’s ability to enforce public safety laws within the state. Similar laws have already been declared unconstitutional in other states. On March 3, 2023, a federal judge in Kansas City struck down the Second Amendment Preservation Act, Missouri’s nullification statute, ruling that it is unconstitutional. Even portions of HB 2803 that might survive a constitutional challenge would make Kansas law enforcement agencies subject to expensive lawsuits.

While that statute was in effect in Missouri, law enforcement expressed that the policy made it much more difficult for state and local law enforcement to do their jobs, filing letters and even a lawsuit supported by 60 police chiefs in Missouri in opposition to the law. We want our law enforcement officers to have clear guidance on what they can and cannot do and this bill makes that complicated and confusing.

This bill comes at a time when Kansas voters are increasingly concerned about the epidemic of gun violence. In Kansas, the rate of gun suicide increased 14% and gun homicide increased 102% from 2012 to 2021. We need bills that aim to reduce this violence, such as safe storage bills like 2413, instead of bills that want to turn a blind eye to gun violence, like HB 2803.

I respectfully ask all members of the committee to vote no on HB 2803.

Thank you,

Claudia Olea  
Lawrence, Kansas