

Donna Carlson
PO Box 93
Garden City, KS 67846
jehovah-shalom@sbcglobal.net
620-290-5453
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Proponent
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Good afternoon and thank you Madam Chair and members of the committee. I am here to encourage you to support parents, children, and the future of our great state by supporting House Bill 2218.

In 1996, my husband and I made a major decision that has affected every day of our lives since then. We choose to take complete responsibility for the education of our children. This meant that we had to decide what our educational priorities were, what the scope and sequence of the curriculum would be, and search out the resources that would help us meet our goals and the unique needs of each child. We have spent tens of thousands of dollars to accomplish a labor of love in the lives of our children. The cost of providing a high quality education is not small, as you are all acutely aware. We have purchased text books, library books, reference books, music books and coloring books. We have invested small fortunes in science lab supplies, music lessons, and academic tutors. Don't get me started on how many scissors and pencils have passed over a Wal Mart scanner. Yet while investing in this educational adventure, we have not benefited from a second income that my labor might have provided, nor have we built up a cushy retirement fund. We have made an intentional sacrifice so that our children would be well trained and able to teach themselves anything. The funding resource that this bill represents would have been a great blessing to our family over the years.

The bill that you are considering is filled with good news, no-*great news*, for the parents of Kansas who want something different for their children. When you pass this bill, parents will be able to use the education dollars from the State of Kansas and choose a school that meets the needs of the child and the family. Some will choose to stay at their local school while others may choose to enroll in private schools in their communities. Where there are no private options today, these dollars will incentivize educators to open schools because parents will have money available for

tuition, something that most rural families don't have today. These new private schools may also incentivize families looking to move to rural Kansas, thereby improving the local economies.

Today, most families in rural Kansas communities have very few academic choices for their children. When this bill is passed children will benefit. Not all children can adjust to the one size fits all model that the standard class room offers. If we want our children to thrive, we must meet them where they are, not where the charts say they should be. Giving parents the resources they need will allow them to enroll in programs that provide a more custom fit for the child. And when the program fits, the child will grow in confidence and skill. This is what is best for our children. This is what is best for our state.

My career as a home educator will end in three short years. Perhaps I will be able to benefit from this Education Savings Account. I hope so. But I have grand children that live here. I have friends with children. It is for them that I advocate. They want what is best for their families. When the state supports parents in educating their children, everyone wins.