

February 6, 2023

Testimony to the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee

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BILL NUMBER: SB 128 Opportunity Tax Credit

PROPONENT, OPPONENT, or NEUTRAL: Opponent

ORAL or WRITTEN ONLY TESTIMONY: Written

Dear Chair & members of the committee,

I am writing to voice my opposition to bill SB128. I have serious reservations about the proposed bill and its moving public funds to non-public schools.

As the parent to a child with special needs, I am disappointed in the amount of effort this year that is focused on supporting non-public schools rather than focusing efforts on fully funding special education to the statutory requirements. I was recently at my son's IEP meeting that was staffed by a dozen professionals. Through hundreds of hours of intervention and therapies, he is now able to attend general education full time. These opportunities would not be available to him in private schools. Funneling funds from public schools to private drains an already stressed public school system.

Further, I have explored the empirical evidence behind programs that shift money from public to private schools. Consistently the data indicates these programs further disenfranchise at risk families and those from a low socioeconomic status. The majority of those taking advantage of the programs are families already attending the private schools in higher tax brackets.

As you deliberate on this topic, I urge you to consider the deleterious impact such a move will have on the most vulnerable in our community. Please oppose SB128 for those of us who rely on the public school system the most.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dr. Sara A. Jahnke

Parent, SMSD

Prairie Village