



*Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities*

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*"To ensure the opportunity to make choices regarding participation in society  
and quality of life for individuals with developmental disabilities"*

Feb. 6, 2017

House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee

Re: In opposition to HB 2243

Chairman Jennings and members of the House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about HB 2243. My name is Craig Knutson, and I am a Public Policy Coordinator for the Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities (KCDD). The Council was created by state and federal law with the expressed intent that Council activities would increase self advocacy and leadership efforts of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), promote systems and systemic change, and enhance capacity building so that people with disabilities could live as independently as possible in the communities of their choice.

It is the firm belief of the Council that adoption of HB 2243 is a step in the wrong direction in ensuring the rights of students with disabilities in our schools. The Council has appointed representation on the The Emergency Safety Intervention (ESI) task force created by Kansas statute to examine and make recommendations regarding the unnecessary seclusion and restraint in public schools.

It was agreed upon as a coalition to support allowing certified law enforcement officers to use mechanical restraint (they have specialized training and rigorous certification to be law enforcement officers). However, the Task Force discussed the idea of expanding the use of mechanical restraint to any school security officer, and we collectively and strongly opposed that expansion.

ALL the interested parties agreed to that compromise – schools, school boards, administrators, state agencies, the state board of education, the disability community, etc. The Task Force compromise was unprecedented and represented a true give and take by all sides.

Reversing this agreed upon decision and expanding the use of mechanical restraints can only result in the increased violation of the rights of students with disabilities, who are disproportionately impacted by unnecessary seclusion and restraint.

Respectfully,

Craig Knutson

Public Policy Coordinator

Kansas Council on Developmental Disabilities