



## House Corrections & Juvenile Justice Committee

February 6, 2017

Presented by:

Rick Cagan

Executive Director

NAMI Kansas is the state organization of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, a grassroots organization whose members are individuals living with mental illnesses and their family members who provide care and support. NAMI Kansas provides programs of peer support and education by and for our members through a statewide network of 13 local affiliates. We advocate for individuals who are living with mental illness to ensure their access to treatment and supportive services.

We urge you to oppose HB 2243.

We have been active participants over the years in discussions about state policy on seclusion and restraints in schools and other institutional settings. We favor policies which limit and reduce the use of these approaches to behavior management. We stand in unison with a wide array of disability organizations.

More than half of children and adolescents with emotional disorders have been the victims of physical or sexual abuse. Many of these students are among those most likely to be involved in situations involving seclusion and restraints in schools. Any intervention involving seclusion and restraints is likely to re-traumatize these students. To that end we need to take appropriate precautions to minimize any use of seclusion and restraints.

We object to provisions in the bill which would allow for the increased use of mechanical restraint in public schools.

HB 2243 turns the clock back on policy changes on the use of seclusion and restraint in public schools which were passed into law in 2016. The Emergency Safety Intervention Task Force created by the legislature unanimously agreed to endorse the changes captured in the 2016 legislation. The implementation and monitoring of the current policy should not be impeded by the changes sought in this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.