

## Testimony in Opposition to HB 2243

Chairman Jennings and Members of the House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee:

My name is Shawna Hinkle. I am the parent of two autistic teenage boys. The topic of seclusion, and restraint is one that is very important to me. I regret that I cannot be there today to speak in person, but I do appreciate the opportunity to submit to you my written testimony.

As someone who is very involved in the autism, and special needs community I hear a lot of stories from Kansas parents about their children being improperly, and dangerously restrained. It happens all the time, everyday, and yes, it does often even involve school security officers.

My son, Ian who is now 13 was badly hurt at school in September of 2013. Ian is profoundly autistic, and nonverbal. He arrived home from school on the bus with both wrists severely bruised. One of them had a contusion on the underside of it that bulged out so much I thought it was his bone, and assumed it was broken. I rushed him to the ER for X-rays, and it turned out it was just bruising. The staff never had any answers for me as to what happened to him. I still don't know. Imagine that not knowing. Imagine that you have a child that can't tell you what happens to them at school. You might feel like things aren't quite right, but you don't really know. Now, imagine for a minute that you *\*do\** know something is happening to them that is harming them, except.... there's nothing you can do about it, because it's perfectly legal thanks to this new loophole to the ESI.

I have testified in person, and submitted testimony several times in favor of the current Emergency Safety Intervention Bill. So many of us worked tirelessly to get it to completion. The ESI Task Force unanimously agreed to the policy changes just last year. These were changes that I have been waiting for since my boys were in pre-school, and had their first incidents with seclusion, and restraint. They are now 13, and 15. These policies have been carefully put in place by legislators after a very thorough process. It would be illogical to undo a part of that process, which in some ways would undo most of it, so soon after it was put in place. All sides came together, and made a solid compromise. Please honor that.