

February 25, 2021
Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 213

Susan Wood
Resident of Douglas County, Kansas

Chairperson Olson and members of the Senate Commerce Committee,

My name is Susan Wood and I thank you for this time today and for considering my testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 213. I am here today as a concerned citizen. I am a lifelong Kansan and an individual member of the Immunize Kansas Coalition (IKC) and currently serve as Past Chair. The views expressed here are my own and not necessarily representative of IKC.

I grew up and continue to live in a small community and commute into other communities to work, shop, and access health care services. We have been adhering to mask, handwashing, and social distancing however we must go out to get necessities for ourselves and family members with greater health risks. While this is fresh in our minds, the presentation of this bill during pandemic fatigue is likely not accidental. Therefore, I must speak up and share my story and my reasoning for my opposition.

- I oppose SB213, because the scope is unlimited and does not consider employers such as hospitals, public health departments, specialty clinics like cancer clinics, and long-term care facilities that currently require vaccinations to protect the patients they serve.
- I oppose SB213, because it does not consider the rights of employees to support themselves and their families in workplaces which have been made safer through the implementation of long-standing, effective public health strategies and prevented disease outbreaks for generation.
- I oppose SB213, because it represents a governmental encroachment into Kansas businesses and eliminates their ability to make meaningful decisions regarding public health vaccination standards based on the services they provide and the people they serve.

Chairperson Olson and member of the Senate Commerce Committee,

- I oppose SB213 as unnecessary. As I read this bill, I was struck by its generalization and the failure to address the downstream impact that will occur if this bill were to be passed.

This bill is an attempt to restrict businesses in their communities, without knowledge of the employer, employees, or their customers. SB213 attempts to create fear of vaccine standards and presumes that Kansas businesses have intention to implement new or different standards. There is no evidence to support this presumption. What is clear is that this proposed bill is written to impact all vaccines, all employers, all employees and ultimately every community and every Kansan.

I respectfully ask you to Vote No – SB213.