



Senate Commerce Committee  
February 5, 2013  
HB 2023

Madame Chairwoman and Members of the Senate Commerce Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee. I am Patrick Woods, President of the Topeka Public Schools, USD 501, School Board. I appear today to advocate simply that local school boards maintain the authority to determine the terms and conditions of the professional services of our employees.

HB 2023, among other similar bills under consideration in front of this Legislature, limits public employers' authority to manage personnel. Your local school boards are locally elected officials charged by local voters to operate local school districts. Bills such as HB 2023 limit local control and usurp local elected officials' authority in dealing with their personnel. While I do not believe the intent of the bill was to tread on local officials' power, it is an unintended consequence and deteriorates the Board's ability to effectively interact with and manage our personnel. USD 501 has opted to allow certain automatic paycheck deductions that are authorized by an employee. We likewise reserve the right to discontinue such practices. Such local authority and control is the primary purpose for having locally elected school boards oversee local school district operations.

Locally elected school boards are an important component of Kansas' education system. The Topeka Public Schools School Board is dedicated to and has been effective in maintaining a productive employer/employee relationship. We respectfully ask that you reject any proposed bills, such as HB 2023, that intrude upon local control and the authority to manage our workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you on this important issue.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'C. Patrick Woods'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is located below the 'Respectfully Submitted,' text.

C. Patrick Woods, President  
Board of Education