



KANSAS NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION / 715 SW 10TH AVENUE / TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612-1686

Timothy R. Graham
Director of Government Relations & Legislative Affairs
Written Testimony – Opponent
House Committee on Federal & State Affairs
House Bill 2803
March 7, 2024

Chairperson Carpenter, members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 2803.

A 2023 report¹ released by the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES)² indicated that school shootings in 2022 were at an all-time high. The data was included in the NCES annual crime and safety report, which was published in September 2023. The report stated that there were 188 shootings with casualties at public and private elementary schools during the 2021-22 school year. About two-thirds of them caused injuries. Fifty-seven led to deaths. This was more than twice the number that was reported previously.

Kansas NEA supports state and local laws that ensure that schools are gun free zones. By prohibiting political subdivisions, or employees of political subdivisions from “knowingly and willingly” participating in the enforcement of any federal law regarding firearms, Kansas NEA is very concerned that HB 2803 could lead to policies that undermine school safety. Furthermore, HB 2803 could cause school resource officers, teachers, or other school district employees to be financially liable for just doing their job to keep students safe in the school. This is unacceptable.

We ask the committee to reject HB 2803.

¹ <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2023//2023092.pdf>

² NCES is the part of the United States Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) that collects, analyzes, and publishes statistics on education and public school district finance information in the United States.