



**House Appropriations Committee  
Representative Rhodes, Chair**

**H.B. 2400 – amending at risk definition**

*Presented by: Diane Gjerstad  
Wichita Public Schools*

March 30, 2011

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

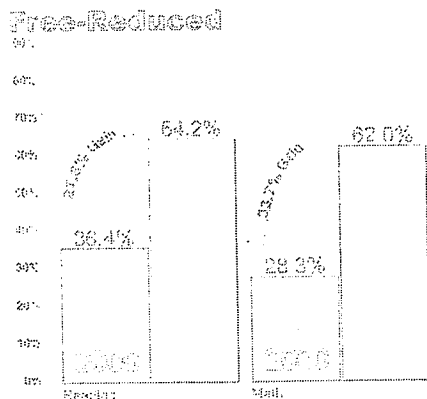
Early this session Dr. Ladner, Goldwater Institute, spoke to Senate Education. In his opening statement he said Kansas ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the achievement of students in poverty. He complimented the state for “doing it right” in the education of students in poverty. The issue of how historically underperformed students are recognized and appropriately funded has been an on-going conversation of this legislature, your predecessors, and several special committees.

The 2006 Legislative Post Audit found the difficulties and issues surrounding students living in poverty are often obstacles to learning. The Legislative Post Audit Cost Study 2006 states on page 38:

**FORMULA**

**As the figure shows, the estimated poverty weight for most districts is .484. That weight implies that it would cost almost 50% more than the estimated base-level costs for students in poverty to achieve the same performance levels that other students are achieving. This is significantly higher than the at-risk weight in the current formula (.193).**

**In the four inner-city districts with high poverty (Kansas City, Kansas City-Turner, Topeka, and Wichita), the estimated poverty weight is .726, which recognizes that the cost of educating students in these types of districts is even greater. There is no separate urban poverty weight in the current funding formula.**



H. B. 2400 would change the funding landscape for a group of students who need additional service to become proficient and stay proficient. Today schools are able to put into place supports to help students who need support to be successful on Kansas state assessments and maintain those supports to maintain proficiency in later grades.

Mr. Chairman, Wichita Public Schools strongly opposes the bill. The current at-risk weighting appropriately targets funding and gives flexibility to schools to address the needs of *any* student needing additional services.

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Attachment 5