



# Mission Valley Athletics and Activities

## *Success. Nothing Less.*

3/12/2013

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs,

I am here to offer my testimony in opposition of House Bill #2197 as a representative of Unified School District #330, Mission Valley Schools, and communities of Eskridge, Harveyville, and Dover. I am also here as a steward of two of Kansas's greatest resources: the taxpayers' dollars and most importantly the youth of Kansas.

I firmly believe that the current governing structure of Kansas State High School Activities Association represents a model for the National Federation of High Schools in how an activities association should be operated. KSHSAA is a member driven organization which is administered by the public and private schools in the State of Kansas. Those member public schools are controlled ultimately by our local boards of education. Each board of education's membership is voted on by the public in each and every district across the state.

I think the most redeeming qualities of KSHSAA are the organization's dedication to the belief that our interscholastic athletics and activities serve as an important part of our students' academic environment, the protection of that academic environment, and the governance of fair and balanced competition in our interscholastic athletics and activities. I would submit that those who oppose how KSHSAA operates often lose sight that our interscholastic athletics and activities serve as a part of the educational process and not as a separate entity.

Proponents of this bill cite seven benefits to changing the structure of our leagues and KSHSAA. Each one centers on either public involvement or transparency of action by those organizations. I would contend that our voting public is well represented in these organizations by the education officials employed to do so. I would assert that school administrators protect the interests of the public, the students, and the educational process when they make decisions in the capacity of a member of a league or KSHSAA board.

Proponents of House Bill #2197 have conveyed the perspective that the public interest is not represented in these meetings, and the voice of the people has not been heard. I submit to you that one would need only sit in my office or the office of any athletic administrator in a school across the state of Kansas for several hours to soon realize that our patrons' voices are heard often, loudly, and clearly. Our represented public does have their opinions heard, and our communities' interests are taken into account when making policy decisions at the league and state level. I would also submit to you that as a public school athletic administrator I have a specific duty to represent wholly and without bias the wishes of my board of education which represents our public and the best interests of our community as their elected duty. If I am derelict in my duty of properly representing our patrons' interest, then they have every right to contact our board of education just as your constituents contact you with concerns. The board of education then has that inherent right and duty to remove me from my role if I don't properly represent the interest of the people of Unified School District #330. I am publicly accountable to my school district as a decision maker at the league and state level as is every administrator in every school district across the state.

Finally, the proponents of House Bill #2197 project a certain aura of secrecy in the operation of our league and KSHSAA. Kansas law dictates that each of these organizations operates in compliance of the Kansas Open Meetings Act. The transparency called for by these proponents is there. The public has forums and methods of communicating their wishes to each of these organizations. All meetings of leagues and the KSHSAA are open to the citizenship. The establishment of membership on policy forming committees in the KSHSAA from not only educational administrators, but also students, coaches, officials, and board of education members demonstrates a willingness to be transparent and listen to the interest of the public.

I appreciate the opportunity to present my opposition to House Bill #2197 and make myself available to you at any time to answer any questions or concerns you may have in regards to my testimony.

Lee Weber  
Activities and Athletic Director  
Mission Valley Public Schools