



February 6, 2017

Representative J. Russell Jennings
Chairman, Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee; Room 152-S
Kansas Capitol
Topeka, KS

Re: In OPPOSITION to HB 2243; An Act concerning schools; authorizing school security officers to use certain types of emergency safety interventions

Chairman Jennings and members of the House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in **opposition to HB 2243**. I am the father of a child with autism in the Kansas public school system. I am also the director of state government affairs for Autism Speaks. Autism Speaks is a national organization dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. We do this through advocacy and support; increasing understanding and acceptance of autism spectrum disorder; and advancing research into causes and better interventions for autism spectrum disorder and related conditions.

Autism Speaks was one of 35 organizations which endorsed the Emergency Safety Intervention (ESI) Task Force recommendations and supported HB 2534 (engrossed House Substitute for SB 193) during the 2016 legislative session. HB 2243 proposes that school security officers be exempt from the current statutory prohibition against the use of mechanical restraints. This proposal is contrary to the recommendations of the ESI Task Force and poses a threat to the safety of Kansas students.

As has been mentioned by other opponents of HB 2243, this issue was carefully considered and rejected by the Task Force. The ESI Task Force supported allowing *only certified law enforcement officers* to use mechanical restraint. Autism Speaks echoes the comments and concerns expressed by the Disability Rights Center of Kansas regarding this bill and urges the committee to vote "NO" on HB 2243.

Thank you for considering my comments,

Michael Wasmer
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cc: Representative Patty Markley