

My name is Timothy Cole. I live in Eudora. I'm the father of five children ranging in age from 2 to 17. My wife and I are home educators. **I am here to speak in support of HB 2540.**

My oldest son grew up playing soccer with his friends in our local recreational soccer league. We had planned for him to continue to play soccer with them in high school, until our local athletic director told us he was ineligible. So instead of playing his ninth year with his friends, he joined a new team this last fall. We were fortunate to find a homeschool team 40 miles away, in Missouri. Unfortunately, Kansas City lies between our home and his team. This meant many trips crossing the city during rush hour, to get to practices and games.

Our family would benefit from the passage of HB 2540 in several ways:

First, access to public school activities would strengthen our relationships and sense of community. Our children would gain an opportunity to meet new friends and maintain established relationships, and my wife and I would continue seeing other community parents at practices and games.

Second, physical fitness. Access to sports through the schools would help us in our efforts to encourage our kids to be active by making a wider variety of sports available in our local community, with teams filled with our children's friends. Fun, friends, and close to home; it's hard to beat that.

Third, time. One advantage of home education is the ability to take our children to places and activities to enhance their learning. However, this benefit does come at a cost sometimes. We have spent a lot of time traveling to other towns so that our daughter could play volleyball and our son could play soccer. I hope this bill passes, so that my younger boys will be able to play sports in our community.

Finally, financially. We are paying taxes that help fund schools in Kansas, then we turn around and pay for them to play in private leagues because they are not currently allowed to play at our local schools. It would take some pressure off our finances to be able to enroll them in sports that are at least partially funded through the taxes we pay.

Thank you for the time you have invested in working on this bill, and for allowing me to share my perspective with you today. **My entire family will be grateful if you pass HB 2540.**