



TESTIMONY OF
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IN OPPOSITION TO SB 56
KANSAS HOUSE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

FEBRUARY 2, 2016

-- WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY --

Thank you, Chairman Barker, and members of the Committee on the Judiciary for and affording us the opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue. The American Civil Liberties Union of Kansas is a membership organization dedicated to preserving and strengthening the constitutional liberties afforded to every resident of Kansas.

The ACLU of Kansas **opposes SB 56**, which removes the affirmative defense to promotion to minors of “material harmful to minors” for public, private, or parochial schools. This bill would have serious, deleterious consequences for students, parents, and teachers.

- **The bill’s definition of materials that are “harmful to minors” is overly broad, relying on a highly ambiguous standard.** The broad and ambiguous nature of the standard to be applied would prevent the distribution of materials that educators have determined to be age-appropriate.
- **The restrictions imposed by the bill will tie the hands of Kansas educators**, preventing them from providing the education that students want and need and that parents expect.
- **SB 56 will criminalize teachers simply for doing their jobs.** The mere act of distributing handouts, displaying posters, sharing educational information, or assigning texts—all as parts of a curriculum approved by local school districts—could be criminal acts as a result of the bill.

We urge you to **oppose SB 56** on these grounds.