

House putting elimination of finance formula on a fast track.

On Friday the House officially unveiled **HB 2403**, the GOP's bill eliminating the school finance formula and, at best, flat funding education for three years. They had a rushed hearing on Monday, made a few minor amendments this morning, stuffed it into **Senate bill 7**, and fired it out.

This bill can be on the floor for debate as early as Thursday. It could be available on the Senate floor early next week. This can all happen without the Senate Ways and Means Committee ever voting. The Senate could adopt this bill with a simple vote to concur in the House amendments to **SB 7**.

This is exactly how the system can be manipulated to ramrod through highly controversial legislation with as little debate as possible.

It bears noting that only the Kansas Chamber, KPI, and Kansans for Liberty support the bill while all testimony from education groups, school districts, and parent groups opposed the bill.

[You can send your Representative a message on this bill by clicking here.](#)

Hearings on block grants in both chambers

The House Appropriations hearing on **HB 2403** was held on Monday; the Senate Ways and Means Committee hearing on **SB 273** was this morning. Both bills were introduced in identical form, although the House Committee made a few amendments before inserting the plan in a Senate bill and sending it on to the full House.

The hearings were very long as many educators came to oppose the plan. Speaking in favor of the block grant bills were Kansas Chamber President Mike O'Neal, KPI Exec Dave Trabert, and Craig Gabel and Chris Brown of Kansans for Liberty, a Tea Party organization. Opposing the bill were KASB, KNEA, USA/KS, the Wichita, Kansas City, Topeka, Hutchinson, and WaKeeney School Districts, the Kansas PTA, Game on for Kansas Schools, and a number of virtual public schools in Kansas.

Despite the Education community's united front, the Committee chose to move ahead with the repeal of the current school finance formula and putting a temporary money distribution system in its place. Now that the House Committee has advanced the bill for consideration, we are unsure how the Ways and Means Committee in the Senate may proceed.

Senate to consider prohibiting public employees from paying association dues via payroll deduction

The Senate Commerce Committee will hold a hearing on Senate Bill 212 which would prohibit school districts from using payroll deduction for the collection of Association dues. Laughingly called "Strengthening protection of public employee paychecks," the bill assumes that Association members need to be protected from themselves in deciding what to do with their earnings.

You might want to share some of our points on this bill with members of the committee.

- I believe that it is my duty as a professional to be actively involved in my professional association because doing so strengthens teaching and learning conditions, offers a mechanism for problem solving and most importantly gives me a solid platform from which I can advocate for my students.
- Previous changes to the dues deduction process restricted the use of dues for political activity. Far from strengthening my paycheck, this bill seems punitive and restricts my colleagues and myself from making choices as consumers particularly when the restriction does not apply to other organizations.
- I voluntarily choose to be a member of my professional association, just as I would voluntarily choose to contribute to United Way a 403B investment product or AFLAC as an insurance provider.

- This bill legislates that as a teacher I am permitted to give via payroll deduction to organizations that meet a specific viewpoint but not to one that meets my own personal viewpoint.

Links to the Commerce Committee members' emails are below.

Alternatively, you can click here to use the KNEA Legislative Alert.

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