



GOVERNOR LAURA KELLY

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

REGARDING HOUSE SUBSTITUTE FOR SENATE BILL 387

It's always been my highest priority to ensure our students have the resources needed to be successful inside and outside the classroom and that we're preparing the next generation of Kansans to contribute to our growing economy and ever-changing workforce. For far too long, our state was failing at this endeavor because we failed to invest in our schools and students appropriately. Instead, students were subjected to four-day school weeks and crowded classrooms, preventing them from receiving the educational experience they deserved and are constitutionally entitled to.

Over the last six years, I've worked with the Legislature to fix a severely underfunded K-12 education system that lacked the resources needed to effectively prepare students for lifelong success. When I became Governor, my first order of business was to end the cycle of school finance litigation caused by years of underfunding. Reckless leadership and mismanagement of the state's finances made it impossible for the state to adequately fund our schools. Since then, we've seen how investment in our education system pays significant dividends for our entire state. Students now have more opportunities than ever to explore their educational and professional interests. Our commitment to fully funding public education better supports teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators. More than anything, our increased investment has paid off as student test scores continue to increase across multiple measures.

House Substitute for Senate Bill 387 represents a continued commitment to our students and our schools. This bill fully funds public education for a sixth consecutive year, providing additional funding for the BASE State Aid in accordance with the *Gannon* mandate. Additionally, this bill provides \$75 million in new special education funding, enacting the first year of a phased-in approach for the state to meet its statutory obligation to fully fund special education. This funding will provide critical support to districts that have been shouldering the burden of the state's decade-long failure to meet its statutory obligation and ultimately its promise to the next generation of Kansans. With these additional funds, districts will be able to properly invest in special education educators and better support students with Individualized Education Plans. Investing in special education serves all students as it reduces the amount of general education funds that must be transferred to cover special education costs. This means districts can now consider increasing teacher salaries, expanding career and technical education opportunities, and supporting enhanced literacy instruction. While this funding is a critical first step, it is just a first step. We must continue to increase special education funding in future years. I appreciate the Legislature's willingness to collaborate on this funding increase and look forward to their continued commitment to our special education students and educators.

I am proud to sign House Substitute for Senate Bill 387, continuing my deep commitment to fully funding our schools and supporting our students. This bill exemplifies how, when we work together, we can find solutions that improve the experiences of Kansas students, invest in our educators, and benefit the entire state.

Therefore, pursuant to Article 2, Section 14(b) of the Constitution of the State of Kansas, I hereby return House Substitute for Senate Bill 387 with my signature approving the bill, except for the item enumerated below.

School Safety and Security Grants Proviso

The portion of Sec. 2(a) that reads as follows has been line-item vetoed:

Provided, That expenditures shall be made by the above agency from the school safety and security grants account for fiscal year 2025 for disbursements of grant moneys approved by the state board of education for the: (1) Acquisition of automated external defibrillators and routine maintenance of such devices; (2) purchase and installation of security cameras that are compatible with the firearm detection software specified in paragraph (3); and (3) notwithstanding the provisions of K.S.A. 72-1151, and amendments thereto, or any other statute, acquisition and implementation of firearm detection software that: (A) Can reduce the threat and impact of gun violence by providing a firearm detection software solution that integrates into existing security camera systems; (B) is designated as qualified anti-terrorism technology under the federal SAFETY act, 6 U.S.C. § 441 et seq.; (C) complies with industry standard information security frameworks, including ISO 27001 and SOC 2 type 2; (D) is managed through a constantly monitored operations center that is staffed by highly trained analysts to ensure rapid communication of possible threats to end users; (E) is developed in the United States without the use of any third-party or open-source data; (F) is protected by an awarded patent that includes a training database populated with frames of actual videos of firearms that were taken in relevant environments across diverse industries; (G) is utilized in at least 30 states with customers in the public and private sectors; (H) does not store, monetize or collect any biometric data or personally identifiable information; and (I) is able to detect three broad firearm classifications with a minimum of 300 subclassifications and has the ability to detect at least 2,000 permutations: *Provided further*, That all moneys expended for school safety and security grants for fiscal year 2025 shall be matched by the receiving school district on a \$1-for-\$1 basis from other moneys of the school district that may be used for such purpose: *And provided further*, That, notwithstanding the provisions of K.S.A. 75-3739, and amendments thereto, or any other statute, not less than 30 days following the effective date of this act, the above agency shall publish a list of the entities that provide firearm detection software that meets the requirements of paragraph (3).

The provision included in this section would significantly alter the current School Safety and Security Grant program—which currently provides critical financial support to schools improving their physical safety and employing school resource officers—into a no-bid contract by inserting requirements that eliminate nearly all potential competition. If enacted, schools would not be able to use these funds to invest in other school safety efforts, like purchasing updated communications systems, hiring more security staff, and making investing in physical infrastructure. While the goal of this provision to provide schools with the opportunity to secure new weapon detection systems is laudable, districts should be provided with the flexibility to use these funds to address needs that are of utmost priority to student safety. Absent this provision being enacted into law, I urge the Kansas State Department of Education to allow these funds to be granted to districts for the purchase of automated external defibrillators and the other allowable uses that were previously approved for this program. We must continue to work together to ensure our students have a safe, conducive environment for their learning. To do that, we should not hamstring districts by limiting this funding opportunity to services provided by one company.

THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

BY THE GOVERNOR



DATED

