

SB#219 Accept Cash @ School Events

Senate Education Committee Testimony

Proposed Talking Points

Soraya Luschas

- Personal story of trying to get advance cash tickets to an event, not having parents there
- Statistics from the Fed about cash payments, people without credit cards

Susan Luschas

- Local Control - All State Band, Can't speak at private school's board meetings, OG and SFSD Cashless Policy
- The Denny, The Dome, and the Washington Pavilion all take cash for admission to events. Some of them do not take cash for concessions, but this bill does not include concessions. This bill does not interfere with 3rd party vendor concession contracts

Michele (remote from Sioux Falls area)

- Personal experience of hoops required to get into an event with cash in advance

Jen (remote from Spearfish,SD)

- Hi, I'm Jen from Spearfish, District XXXX
- I am not comfortable agreeing to the privacy and tracking policies of a private, out-of-state company to attend one of my kids school events. Even the on-site credit card readers get scanned through this third party company's system.
- I am testifying because not only is this an issue when we travel to the Sioux Falls area, but it is rumored that Rapid area school districts will not take cash next year.
- Thank you for supporting SB219.

Nikki (remote from Sioux Falls, SD)

- My family had cash but was turned away from event(s). Personal story.

Soraya

My name is Soraya and I am 18 years old and attend Lincoln High School. My school district, the largest in the state with over 24 thousand students, moved to a cashless ticketing system in the fall of 2024. Many of the surrounding school districts and private schools did too. Parents spoke up at two school board meetings in my district to no avail. Families showing up with cash at events had differing outcomes. Sometimes they were let in for free. Sometimes the cash was stuffed in pockets and they were let in. Sometimes they were turned away.

Finally my school decided that if families came to the school with cash during business hours in advance, they could find the athletic director and get a paper QR code printed. This means families have to get off work to go to school, or have their kids go to the office during their free period to get a ticket printed. I can say from experience that this is a big pain and a huge barrier for families to attend events, and all for this one piece of paper. Last we have heard from the school district, in the 2025-2026 school year there will no longer be any way to pay with cash, even in advance.

Who exactly is being excluded from school events?

Let's look at Table 24 of the Federal Reserve's 2023 Report on the Economic Well-Being of US Households in 2023. The table has the percentage of households who have a credit card. For ease of discussion, I have added a column to the right with the percentage who don't have a credit card.

54% of families with incomes less than \$25,000 don't have a credit card. At South Dakota's 2023 real median income level of \$81,740, 11% of families don't have a credit card.

Looking to the Race/ethnicity column, 30% of black and 26% of Hispanic families don't have a credit card. In the disability column, 31% of people with a disability don't have a credit card.

Overall at the bottom of the table, 18% of Americans don't have a credit card.

You could argue that people without a credit card might still have a debit card. Let's look at the next page, Table 18, the Unbanked rate. Unbanked means neither they nor their spouse or partner has a checking, savings, or money market account.

23% of families with income less than \$25,000 are unbanked. 14% of black families are unbanked, and 11% of Hispanic families are unbanked. The rate among the disabled is 11% unbanked.

From these statistics, I have to conclude that the majority of people being excluded by cashless ticketing are low-income, minorities, and the disabled.

Finally the last page shows Trends in Payment from the Federal Reserve in 2023. In 2022, about 18% of payments were cash. This is down from 31% cash payments in 2016. As a society, we aren't paying with cash as much as we used to, so I'm not sure why collecting cash is suddenly a safety issue. Furthermore, we have been transacting exclusively with cash for over 200 years in this country. Please support SB219 so everyone can attend school events.

Michele

Thank you Mr. Chair and Committee Members for allowing me to testify remotely.

I'm going to share my experience with cashless entry.

Because my oldest child graduated May 2023, I did not expect this change to have a major impact on our family. Also, the school board addressed concerns indicating NO student or community member would be denied from attending an event if they wanted to use cash for entry fees.

My daughter, who is homeschooled, is a member of American Heritage Girls and her Unit planned to attend a high school theatre production. The cost of her fee was covered by the Troop. However, others who planned to attend would be responsible for their own costs. Our families preferred payment is cash and knowing the district was willing to work with families, I reached out to the school in advance.

The school was not able to provide the option for me to purchase tickets with cash. I was directed to the Instructional Planning Center, which is the district's main office. The IPC was also unable to provide a cash option and redirected me back to the school. I spoke with the athletic director who took my name and names of those who would be joining me – Our entry fees were waived.

After we were marked as paid, we took a few steps to a table that was taking free-will donations where monies would go to support the Theatre Dept. The only donation option was CASH.

We have not attended a local school-affiliated event since and plan to continue to avoid events because of our experience. The process to pay with cash, which the school board said would not be a problem, was a hassle for all involved. With your support for SB219, our family and those similar to ours will have the opportunity to attend and support school events.

Thank you for your time