

Don't blame education for cuts to other depts.

As to be expected, education is becoming the "black spot" in Kansas.

A letter last week signed by those involved with highway construction — associations affiliated with contractors, aggregate producers, engineers, asphalt, concrete and ready mix concrete — attacked the efforts to secure adequate funding for state schools as short-changing everyone else.

"For decades, lawyers have entangled our school districts in lawsuit after lawsuit seeking more funding. Each time, taxpayers pay more, yet wind up with less for other essential priorities," the letter reads.

Begging to differ, but these efforts are to help schools, not "entangle" them, and to portray their lawyers as greedy is disingenuous.

State funding cannot be a zero-sum game.

If one department secures increased funding, another should not get "the short end of the stick," as the letter reads.

But that's what Kansas did when the tax cuts of 2012 derailed the budget. It should not come as a surprise that reduced income would result in reduced funding.

Hopefully we have learned that our needs

should dictate our budget, not the other way around.

And yes, essential services such as safe roads and bridges, correctional facilities, hospitals, universities, and veterans affairs, must and should be adequately funded.

It's also important to note that the signatures on the letter represent just one of many private-sector vendors that contract with the state and suffered the consequences of the tax cuts. Other vendors include those in security, computer programming and technology, health care, insurance, food service, to name a few.

What we have learned from the tax cuts is that those savings accrued to individuals and corporations were not used to create new jobs, as predicted.

Had the state not cut its budget those contractors would still have jobs keeping our roads and bridges up to snuff, our schools humming along, our prisons and veterans programs on track.

If contractors are looking for a scapegoat for their woes they should put the blame where it is due — Gov. Sam Brownback and those conservatives who supported his tax cut plan.

To do otherwise is unfair, not to mention uncivil.

— Susan Lynn