



DCCCA
IMPROVING LIVES

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Testimony in Support of HB 2680
House Committee on Transportation
February 14, 2024

Representative Francis and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share testimony supporting HB 2680 which is designed to mitigate the perilous risks associated with leaving children unattended in motor vehicles. My name is Chrissy Mayer, and I am the Chief Community-Based Services Officer at DCCCA. We provide a variety of social services including supporting transportation safety efforts through the contract for the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office. With our traffic safety work, our goal is to provide public information and education to protect Kansans from avoidable injury or death on our roadways. DCCCA has served Kansas communities, children, and families for nearly 50 years.

We have an opportunity to safeguard the lives and well-being of our state's youngest citizens. Over the past two decades, Kansas has witnessed a distressing toll, with at least 15 tragic fatalities attributable to children being alone in hot cars. Additionally, numerous other incidents have resulted in serious injuries and hospitalizations, highlighting the urgent need for proactive measures to address this pressing public safety concern.

HB 2680 proposes a vital provision: it prohibits the unattended confinement of children aged 8 or younger in vehicles without the supervision of an individual aged 12 or older. Furthermore, the bill mandates a \$100 penalty for violations of this statute. By implementing such measures, HB 2680 underscores a judicious approach aimed at both raising awareness and serving as a deterrent against the hazardous practice of leaving children alone in vehicles.

The risks associated with this practice are multifaceted encompassing threats such as heatstroke, power window and seat belt strangulation, carbon monoxide poisoning, fires, knocking cars into gear, cars stolen with children alone inside, and other serious hazards. With 21 states already having enacted similar legislation, the momentum for action is clear.

I encourage you to support HB 2680 which will serve as a pivotal stride towards protecting the lives and well-being of youth in Kansas.

Respectfully submitted,

Chrissy Mayer
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