



Written Testimony Only

Opposition to SB 391

Tracy Russell, Executive Director, Nurture KC

February 14, 2024

Madam Chair and Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee,

My name is Tracy Russell and I serve as the Executive Director of Nurture KC, an organization committed to improving the health and wellbeing of mothers and babies. To that end, a top priority of Nurture KC is to promote the importance of vaccines as key to prevention of disease for mothers and babies.

SB 391 would greatly hinder the ability of state and local public health to mitigate the spread of contagious disease, causing needless harm to Kansans. Containment through notification and quarantine is an essential tool in preventing disease spread as well as informing Kansans of exposure. Such a policy removes the right of a majority of Kansans to reduce their exposure to vaccine-preventable disease.

Over the last several years, we have experienced outbreaks of measles, mumps, chicken pox and whooping cough, predominantly among unvaccinated clusters. Containment has been essential in turning back these threats. At Nurture KC, our priority is the health of babies. With whooping cough in particular, handicapping the ability to inform and stop the spread is vital to the health of our babies. Exposing babies to these diseases during a time when they may not yet be eligible for vaccination is cruel and unnecessary.

I urge you to reject the policies of SB 391 and allow public health to do its job in protecting us from harm. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.