



Testimony on HB 2482

**House Judiciary Committee
January 31, 2012**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2482. The Children's Alliance is the association of the private child welfare agencies in Kansas. Our members provide a host of services to children including family preservation, kinship care, foster care, adoption, residential services, independent living, and psychiatric residential treatment.

Adoption is an important service for the children served because it provides children and young adults with "forever families". The Kansas foster care system is one of the prime resources for Kansas children needing these permanent families. Between July 2011 and December 2011 there were 493 children adopted out of the foster care system. Foster parents made up the single largest percentage of these adoptions with 54%. The next largest group were relatives, and they made up 41% of these adoptions.

This is to say that adoption is a very important service provided by our member agencies impacting a large number of children and families. The Children's Alliance believes that HB 2482 represents an important update to the Kansas adoption statutes. The bill clarifies the father's obligation to actually make a tender of support which we see as being superior to a mere offer of support to the birth mother. Another positive aspect of this bill is the requirement on the father to provide support for the birth mother during pregnancy. We also support the extension for a 90 day transition in contested adoptions where the adoptive father prevails.

Again, I want to thank the committee for studying this important issue and for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Children's Alliance.

Bruce Linhos
Executive Director
Children's Alliance of Kansas