

STATE CHILD DEATH REVIEW BOARD



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Testimony for Senate Judiciary Committee SB 77 Christine M. T. Ladner, Chair of State Child Death Review Board February, 11, 2013

Chairman King and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of SB 77, a bill designed to help the State Child Death Review Board perform its intended function: to develop strategies to help reduce instances of child death in Kansas.

I have served as chair only since 2009. From the beginning of my tenure, I developed great professional regard for our members who volunteer their time and expertise; Dr. Kathryn Melhorn has served since its inception. What I observed as we reviewed these cases, was a sense of frustration among our members, particularly from the physicians on the board, that the use of our data was overly restricted by our statutory authority and the limits of confidentiality. Previously, academics in the arena of public health have requested access to our data and have been denied because of the very narrow language regarding confidentiality of information and records. In response, SB 360 was introduced in 2012. The bill did not get out of committee. In 2013, the board remains supportive of this legislative change in the form of SB77. We recognize that current law falls short. SB 77 would allow for more effective use of the board's data. The drafted language would allow for appropriate disclosure while protecting confidentiality of identifying information.

The State Child Death Review Board takes its duties very seriously. The goal is to help ourselves prevent child death. SB 77 is a good step toward learning more about how to protect children and reduce the dangers they face.