

State of Kansas

Senate Chamber

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Honorable Committee Chair Estes and Committee Members,

It's an honor to support SB 401, a bill that is intended to assure children are placed in loving homes for adoption in Kansas.

I've had the opportunity to have an observatory perspective of adoption in Kansas from both vantage points, that of adoptive parents and pregnant mothers wanting their child to be adopted. Over the years my husband and I have many family friends that have pursued adoption and undergone the process through various agencies in Kansas. As a former high school teacher and college faculty member, I've been called upon to help find an agency that the expectant mother trusts and feels comfortable with in coordinating the adoption process.

What is best about the different adoption agencies I've encountered in Kansas, is that they provide assistance to the mother in finding what she feels will be the best home for her child. Each agency is different and serves the differing needs and desires of the mother. This is so important in the adoption placement process. Several adoptive families that I know worked with religious affiliated agencies because they represented the faith and values of the couple and the mother. Former students also made their adoption agency selections based on personal values, church affiliation, and the stated mission of the agency. One student specifically selected an agency to coordinate a same-sex adoption for her child because that best matched her home environment.

I want all Kansas mothers that choose adoption to continue to have the full array of family choices for the future of their child. I want them to be able to choose the agency that best fits their needs, hopes and dreams. We have wonderful adoption agencies throughout Kansas. It would be a grave misfortune for I the choices that are availed mothers that select adoption to be thwarted in any manner.

Respectfully submitted,

Molly Baumgardner
Kansas Senate, 37th District