



Kansas  
Breastfeeding  
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February 21, 2020

Senator Gene Suellentrop, Chair  
Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee  
Proponent, SB 440

Chair Suellentrop and Committee Members:

I am writing on behalf of the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition (KBC) in support of Senate Bill (SB) 440 which provides additional options to fulfill work participation requirements under the cash assistance program. The KBC believes SB 440 will have a significant, positive impact on families receiving TANF assistance.

Many of these Kansans who would benefit are mothers and babies. Under SB 440, "*A single parent of a child who is between three months and one year of age may fulfill work participation requirements by engaging in in-home parenting skills training*". The in-home skill training could include breastfeeding education and support. The KBC stands ready to assist in the development of this training.

Over 90% of mothers in Kansas choose to breastfeed.<sup>1</sup> Yet two thirds of Kansas children are not breastfed for a full year, falling far short of the medical recommendation for a full year of breastfeeding. The most recent data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2016 births)<sup>2</sup> identifies the rate of breastfeeding for one year at 34.6% in Kansas. Clearly families in Kansas want to breastfeed, including those on TANF. SB 440 would support families receiving TANF by providing essential breastfeeding information and support during a critical period of a child's life.

Suboptimal breastfeeding rates in Kansas result in significant excess health care costs and preventable deaths. The economic benefits to the family, health care system and workplace are widely published in the literature. If 90% of infants were breastfed according to universal medical recommendations, Kansas would save nearly \$27 million per year in health care costs and avert 8 infant and 22 maternal deaths.<sup>3</sup> By supporting more mothers to be able to breastfeeding for longer with in-home parent skills training that includes breastfeeding, SB 440 would lower health care costs and create healthier Kansans.

I respectfully urge the committee to favorably pass SB 440 out of committee for consideration by the full Senate body. It is vital that mothers and babies on TANF in Kansas receive essential breastfeeding skills education with lifelong benefits to their health and wellbeing.

Sincerely,

Brenda Bandy, IBCLC  
Executive Director  
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition

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<sup>1</sup> Kansas Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System, 2018

[http://www.kdheks.gov/prams/downloads/Kansas\\_PRAMS\\_2018\\_Surveillance\\_Report.pdf](http://www.kdheks.gov/prams/downloads/Kansas_PRAMS_2018_Surveillance_Report.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis\\_data/rates-any-exclusive-bf-state-2016.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/nis_data/rates-any-exclusive-bf-state-2016.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Breastfeeding Saves Lives Calculator, [www.usbreastfeeding.org/saving-calc](http://www.usbreastfeeding.org/saving-calc), Accessed January 19, 2020.

Stuebe, A. M. et al (in press - 2017). An online Calculator to estimate the impact of changes in breastfeeding rates on population health and costs. *Breastfeeding Medicine*

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**Mission** To improve the health and well-being of Kansans by working collaboratively to promote, protect and support breastfeeding.

**Vision** Breastfeeding is normal and supported throughout Kansas.