



Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children

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February 22, 2021

House Children and Seniors Committee

Chairwoman Concannon and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for taking the time to hear testimony regarding HB 2371. I am reaching out to you as the President of Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children (KSAEYC) as a proponent of this bill. KSAEYC is the state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and our mission is to promote high quality learning experiences for children birth through age 8.

The 2020 Kansas Early Childhood Systems Building Needs Assessment states that infant and toddler costs nearly 49% of total income for a single parent. We know that many families who qualify for assistance such as child care subsidy and SNAP nutrition are not utilizing these services, which can lead to placement in unregulated, and sometimes unsafe, care settings and increased food insecurity for families of young children. Meeting the basic health and safety needs of children and families is critical to creating environments where children thrive and removing barriers to access as proposed in HB 2371 has the potential to ensure that more families in Kansas will be able to utilize subsidy programs. This aligns with NAEYC's vision statement that "all young children thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential."

I appreciate the time from the House Children and Seniors Committee to read my remarks in support of HB 2371. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I can provide further information to the committee.

Respectfully,

Berni Howe, M.S.

President, Kansas Association for the Education of Young Children

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