

United Way

SUCCESS BY 6™

Helping all children succeed for life.

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Friday February 19, 2021

House Children and Seniors Committee

Chairwoman Concannon and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing this bill to have a hearing. I am a proponent of HB 2371. I work as the Collaborative Projects Coordinator for Success By 6 Coalition of Douglas County. The mission of Success By 6 is to ensure that all Douglas County families of children under 6 have what they need to successfully parent their young children, thereby fostering positive parent-child relationships and preparing children for to success in school and in life.

HB2371 addresses a problem that SB6 and our partners encounter daily. Namely, families struggle to meet their basic needs. Feeding America projected an overall food insecurity rate in Douglas County in 2020 at 16.1% up from 14.1% in 2018. Feeding America projected the food insecurity rate for children in Douglas County in 2020 to be 22.9%. Almost daily we receive desperate calls from parents stuck between a rock and a hard place trying to get to work but unable to afford childcare. These good hard-working Kansans make significant contributions to our local economy and to our tax base. Some families manage to keep their children in childcare by going hungry or by letting rent or utility bills go unpaid. It is all we can do to keep working families from winding up at the homeless shelter or having utilities shut off. None of this is good for the health of our economy.

Success By 6 Coalition of Douglas County supports HB2371 because we see how families are doing their best to nurture their infants, train up their toddlers, and educate their preschoolers under increasingly harsh economic conditions. These families need and deserve our state to honor them and their contributions.

Success By 6 Coalition of Douglas County urges you to remember that our future depends on all our kids. Strengthening families results in optimal child outcomes. SB6 is available to answer any questions or to offer further data and information.

Rich Minder, Collaborative Projects Coordinator, 785-842-8719, rich@dcsb6.org.

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