



3005 Cherry Hill  
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[www.ksbreastfeeding.org](http://www.ksbreastfeeding.org)

January 31, 2022

Congresswoman Susan Concannon, Chair  
House Committee of Children and Seniors

RE: Written-only Proponent testimony for HB 2525

Chairperson Concannon and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition (KBC) and the First 1,000 Days Kansas initiative, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill (HB) 2525 which would expand access to child care and food assistance. HB 2525 will keep more Kansas children fed while helping parents to lift their families out of poverty.

It is vital this committee support HB 2525 which would remove the child support cooperation requirement for child care and food assistance. Kansas families, and disproportionately families headed by single mothers, have faced extreme hardships even prior to the economic fallout of the pandemic. Barriers to food and child care assistance make things harder for low-income families who are already struggling.

HB 2525 will keep more Kansas kids fed. Parents who choose not to open a child support case are often avoiding putting their families in danger by an abusive ex-partner or have informal arrangements with the non-custodial parent that work best for their family's situation. Only the parent living with the children is disqualified for non-cooperation, disproportionately punishing kids and single mothers. HB 2525 would make it easier for single mothers to pursue opportunities including education by reducing a portion of the financial burden.

HB 2525 would also keep more Kansas families together. The most common reason children enter the Kansas foster care system is neglect, which could be due to a lack of basic needs like food. This means kids are removed from their families, with whom they could be safe and healthy if they just had a little help. HB 2525 would make it easier for families to access food assistance and decrease the burden on the already overwhelmed Kansas foster care system.

HB 2525 would reduce economic stress that increases the likelihood of unhealthy and unsafe home environments which can limit children's opportunities to grow and reach their full potential. Support of HB 2525 is an investment in the health and success of Kansas children.

The Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition and the First 1,000 Days Kansas initiative respectfully urge the committee to support HB 2525 to improve the health and wellbeing of Kansas families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda Bandy".

Brenda Bandy, IBCLC  
Co-Executive Director  
Kansas Breastfeeding Coalition  
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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.