

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



SUSAN HUMPHRIES
99TH DISTRICT

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DATE: February 16, 2022
TO: House Children and Seniors Committee
FROM: Susan Humphries, Kansas House of Representatives, District 99
Re: Proponent Testimony HB 2700 (In-person)

Chair Concannon and members,

I come to you today as a proponent of HB 2700, with reasons outlined below. But first, I come to you as a concerned observer of heartbreaking decisions made in adoption proceedings when the science of attachment has not been fully taken into account. I come to you as the past Vice-Chair of this committee, and as a current member of the Joint Committee on Child Welfare System Oversight. I was also on the 2020 Special Committee on Foster Care Oversight. I come to you as an adoption attorney for the last seven years, and lastly, I come to you as an adoptive parent.

In the law, we use a standard called “the best interest of the child” in making decisions regarding child welfare. I submit to you that taking current attachment into consideration when making adoption placement decisions is fully in the best interest of the child. There is general agreement that seeking kin first is the priority. But when a child cannot be placed with kin for one reason or another, and they are placed in a foster home, forming secure attachments to their surrogate caregivers is highly valuable for their current and future development.

Because of the experience I mentioned above, I have heard dozens of stories of the system NOT taking this attachment into consideration. After hearing testimony, the Joint Committee on Child Welfare Oversight recommended action on attachment science, and HB 2700 is the result of several entities working together and is a start in getting this right in Kansas for the best interest of our vulnerable children.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Humphries

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