



**Proponent Testimony on HB2115 – Written Only
Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee
March 17, 2021**

Chair Hilderbrand and Members of the Committee, my name is Rachel Marsh, CEO of the Children's Alliance of Kansas. The Alliance is an association of 18 private, non-profit child welfare agencies that collectively provide a full array of services for children and families in child abuse and neglect prevention, family preservation, foster care, adoption, independent living, and parent, youth, and child skill-building, mental health, and substance use treatment.

The Alliance supports a standing oversight committee on child welfare systems issues. We appreciate the **specific language of the scope and responsibility of oversight proposed by HB2115**. HB2115 reflects a modern understanding of the child welfare system, which encompasses child abuse prevention, maltreatment investigations, services to safely reduce the need for foster care, and foster care and adoption. HB2115 reflects the reality that success in child welfare is intertwined with silos such as mental health, substance use treatment, education, law enforcement, the judiciary, and juvenile justice services. HB2115 brings a commitment to data-driven and evidence-informed recommendations. HB2115 recognizes that federal oversight and ongoing performance improvement take place continually through the Child and Family Child Services Review, as well as various standing committees and *ad hoc* task groups in the child welfare system. Finally, HB2115 maintains a critical focus on the **child welfare workforce** and the need to overhaul **DCF's data and technology systems** as recommended by the 2019 Child Welfare Systems Task Force. These two issues remain top priorities for the Children's Alliance as integral to every aspect of a functional child welfare system.

We support HB2115. Thank you again for your support of a strong child welfare system in Kansas.

Members of the Children's Alliance of Kansas:

CALM, Emporia	KVC Kansas, Olathe
Cornerstones of Care, Overland Park	KidsTLC, Olathe
DCCCA, Lawrence	Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, Mayetta
Eckerd, Wichita	Restoration Family Services, Wichita
EmberHope, Wichita	Saint Francis Ministries, Salina
Florence Crittenton, Topeka	TFI Family Services, Topeka
FosterAdopt Connect, Olathe	The Children's Shelter, Lawrence
Great Circle, Lawrence	The Villages, Topeka
Kansas Children's Service League, Topeka	Wichita Children's Home, Wichita