

3/8/2022

Renee Michaud, Director
St. Joseph Food Pantry & Diaper Closet
215 West 13th, Hays, 67601

Opposition to Senate Bill 501—Committee on Public Health and Welfare

Chairman Hilderbrand and members of the Committee:

This testimony is submitted on behalf of St. Joseph Food Pantry & Diaper Closet located in Hays, KS. in opposition to Senate Bill 501.

I have been the Director of this Food Pantry in our Community for 21 years. While our community is very supportive of our work, the individual donations we receive account for only 20-30% of the food volume we distribute. Cutting the Federal Funding of such support would tremendously impact the work that the Kansas Food Bank can do by providing Food Pantries all across our state with affordable nonperishable, frozen and fresh produce food items that we can share to our families who are in need.

Currently we serve 80-90 families twice each month, and in addition, we support our local First Call for Help Office and our Catholic Charities Office with food to assist additional families during the time between our pantry days. With the rising costs of gasoline and food prices, we expect the need to continue to rise.

As a lifelong Kansan, I continue to work to keep our community strong and healthy and our state a great place to live. I ask for your thoughtful consideration and vote in opposition to this bill that will:

- cost Kansas tax payers tens of millions of dollars, increase food insecurity among working poor Kansas families and put additional pressures on community food pantries trying to help their neighbors.
- bloat state government, increase food insecurity and overwhelm the charitable food pantries in Kansas.
- make these important family support programs more costly and less effective, further overburdening Kansas' charitable food pantries.

Thank you for your consideration, your time, and your service to our great state.
Sincerely,

Renee Michaud, Director
St. Joseph Food Pantry and Diaper Closet, 215 W. 13th, Hays, KS 67601