



Written Only Testimony in Support of S.B. 494

Brittany Jones

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Chairwoman Tyson and members of the committee, my name is Brittany Jones. I am an attorney and the Director of Policy and Engagement for Kansas Family Voice. We represent thousands of members in Kansas who want to come alongside children and families in the adoption process. I am writing today to encourage you to support S.B. 494.

Throughout society, children are waiting to be adopted into loving families. Adoptions can cost tens of thousands or more depending on where the family is adopting. This is a cost prohibitive for so many families who just want to help a child in need. Many of these parents are already raising children but want to add to their family through adoption.

We believe that we should do everything we can to help families who would like to help these children. While adoption is an imperfect solution to the problem of a child without a home or a family, adoption is the best option to give that child a stable, loving environment. I personally know so many families that have grown their families through adoption. Adoption is a calling for many families but often they need help to make that dream a reality.

In many situations, ensuring a child who is currently in the foster care system is placed in a loving home, releases the government from the obligation to care full time for a child without a home. And it provides them with the best chance to grow into a healthy young adult in a stable home. S.B. 494 is a creative solution to the ever expanding cost of adoption.

Individuals on both sides of the aisle agree that Kansas especially has a foster care problem.<sup>1</sup> Relieving some of the cost for families who seek to adopt children from foster care that are eligible for adoption will help relieve some of this problem. The bottom line is that ensuring that children are placed in loving adoptive homes, is in the best interest of the child and the state. It is life changing for that family and life changing for the child. S.B. 494 can open the door to this life changing option for so many families and children in Kansas!

I, respectfully, ask you to support S.B. 494.

Sincerely, Brittany Jones

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<sup>1</sup> Blaise Mesa, KCUR, Aug. 15, 2023, <https://www.kcur.org/news/2023-08-15/audits-find-kansas-foster-kids-still-sleep-in-state-offices-and-dont-get-enough-mental-health-care>.