



The Family Resource Center

February 18, 2021
House Children and Seniors Committee
House Bill No. 2371

Chairwoman Concannon and Members of the Committee:

Thank you, Chairwoman Concannon and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2371. My name is Ann Elliott and I am the Executive Director of the Family Resource Center, Inc. in Pittsburg, Kansas. The Family Resource Center is licensed to serve 362 children in a high-quality early care and education environment. We have ten child care rooms and nine Pre-K classrooms with 57.4% of our children qualifying for free and reduced lunches.

I have worked in early childhood education for over twenty years and know the importance of equitable access to high-quality early education for our families and the community. According to the All In For Kansas Kids needs assessment 48.7% of a single parents total income goes to child care costs for infants and toddlers. In years past over 60 of our families received child care assistance, today we have fewer then 20 families receiving child care assistance. One of our single moms struggles to pay her bill but would not apply for child care assistance because she would have to check the box on child support recovery and was afraid that something would happen to her child or herself. By removing the barrier of checking a box it would provide a parent with options for equitable access to affordable high-quality early learning and education.

We have always talked to parents about continuing their education in order to find a job that will help them meet the basic needs of their family. We know the education level of a parent is a significant predictor of a child's educational achievements and behavioral outcomes. HB 2371 provides parents the opportunity to pursue educational goals and not lose benefits that provide food and a safe, stable environment for their child while attending school.

The changes outlined in HB 2371 are simple but key to reaching outcomes that ensure Kansas children are safe, healthy and ready to learn and succeed in school. I am excited to support this bill which helps are most vulnerable children meet their developmental needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann Elliott".

Ann Elliott
Executive Director
Family Resource Center, Inc
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