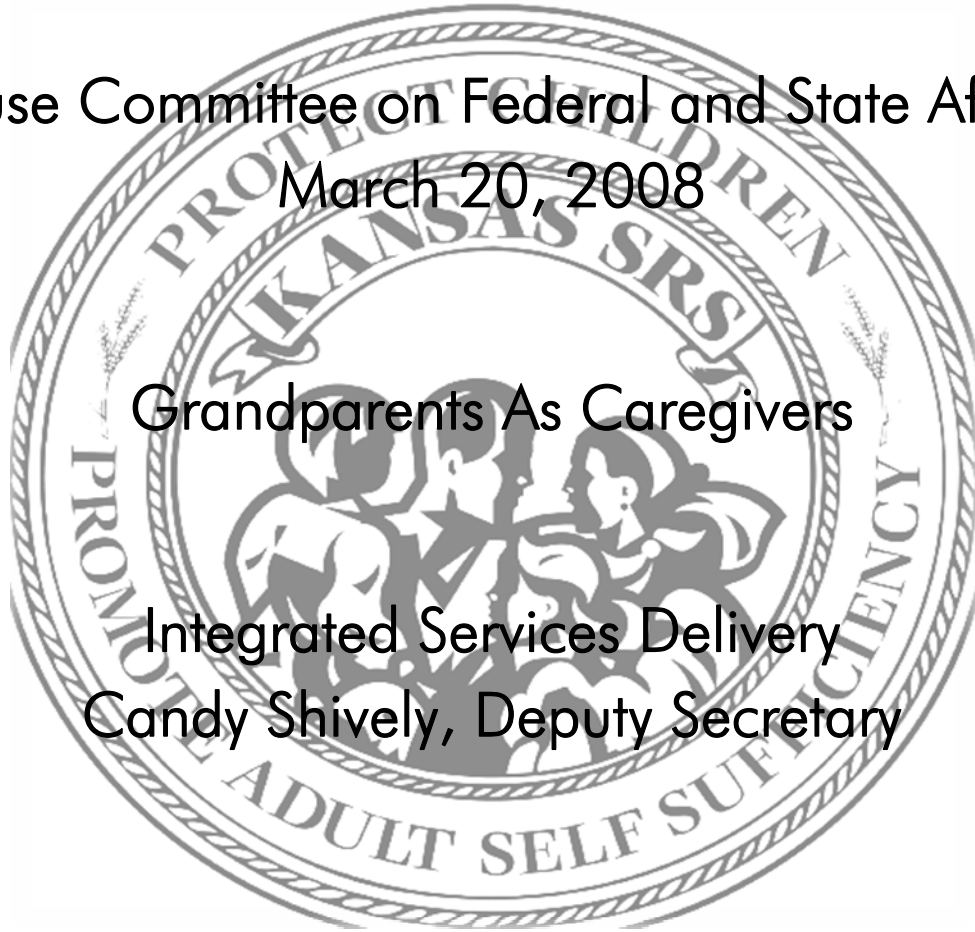


Kansas Department of  
Social and Rehabilitation Services  
Don Jordan, Secretary

House Committee on Federal and State Affairs  
March 20, 2008

Grandparents As Caregivers

Integrated Services Delivery  
Candy Shively, Deputy Secretary



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# Grandparents as Caregivers

## House Committee on Federal and State Affairs March 20, 2008

Chairman Siegfried and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide information on House Bill 2839. House Bill 2839 would remove the requirement that a grandparent possess legal custody of a grandchild in order to participate in the Grandparents as Caregivers Program. The bill would replace the legal custody condition with the requirement that a grandchild only reside with the grandparent. Legal custody includes legal guardianships, legal custody, and temporary legal custody awarded by a court. Other eligibility criteria for the current program includes:

- The grandparent must be 50 years of age or older
- The child must live with the grandparent or relative and the child's parent must not live with the grandparent or child
- The child must not be in state custody
- The child must be less than 18 years of age, or less than 21 years of age if attending school
- Household income must be less than 130% of the federal poverty level.

As of February 2008, 149 families (259 children) have been approved for benefits. The monthly benefit is \$200 for one child, \$400 for two children and \$600 for three or more children. The main reasons families did not qualify for the program were the household's income is over the 130% federal poverty level, the caregiver does not have legal custody and the caregiver's age does not meet the minimum age requirement.

Relatives not qualifying for the Grandparents and Caregivers program have the option to apply for Temporary Assistance to Families (TAF). In this program relatives are not required to have legal custody, only the child's income is counted and there is no age limit for the caregiver. The typical monthly benefit is \$175 for one child, \$271 for two children and \$359 for three children, with a \$61 increase for each additional child.

Other differences between the two programs are that with TAF the child must have less than \$2000 in assets, such as savings or checking accounts, and the relative caregiver must cooperate with child support enforcement. In both programs the child can also qualify for medical assistance.

SRS estimates that passage of HB 2839 would increase expenditures in the Grandparents as Caregivers Program by \$1.3 million from the State General Fund in FY 2009. Without the requirement that the grandparent have legal custody, an additional 1,364 children would be eligible for the program. SRS estimates a participation rate of 40.0 percent in FY 2009, which would add 546 children. The monthly cost per child is \$200.