



*Strong Families Make a Strong Kansas*

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## House Judiciary Committee

January 28, 2014

*Testimony on:*

**HB 2421**

**Testimony of:**

Brian Dempsey, Director of Prevention & Protection Services  
Kansas Department for Children and Families  
Topeka, Kansas

**Presented to:**

The Honorable *Lance Kinzer*, Vice-Chair *Rob Bruchman* and Honorable  
Members of the *House Judiciary Committee*:

**DCF testimony in opposition to House Bill 2421**

I am Brian Dempsey, Director of Prevention and Protection Services, Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF). Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in opposition to HB 2421.

The federal Title IV-E Foster Care Program requires the agency to obtain and verify family incomes to determine which foster care children qualify for federal funding. An external database of earnings and unemployment benefits is used to verify the family income. This verification occurs without the parents' consent. Terminating the use of the third party database (to comply with the requirements of the bill) would result in a higher rate of state funding. The total federal foster care funds at risk are approximately \$22 million per year.

State law provides for the free exchange of information between a number of specifically designated persons, agencies and others to facilitate investigation and ensure provision of services to children who are alleged or adjudicated to be children in need of care. HB 2421 may interfere with or impede joint investigations with law enforcement where there are allegations of abuse and neglect. The bill would prohibit the free exchange of information.

DCF has concerns with respect to certain provisions of the bill as well as the fiscal impact of the proposed bill. We are opposed to the bill as drafted.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to submit testimony with respect to this piece of legislation.

**Brian Dempsey, Director**

**Prevention and Protection Services  
Kansas Department for Children and Families**