



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL
AND REHABILITATION SERVICES

Don Jordan, Secretary

Senate Judiciary Committee
March 16, 2009

**HB 2201 – Professional license sanctions for
nonpayment of child support**

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Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Janis DeBoer, and I am Director of the SRS Child Support Enforcement program. Thank you for the opportunity to appear in support of HB 2201, which I encourage you to recommend for passage.

Several years ago, the Legislature created a sanction against professional licenses that judges could apply when they found a parent in contempt of court for nonpayment of child support. HB 2201 will allow judges to use the same sanction in hearings that do not involve contempt of court, so long as child support is at least three months overdue. We believe this is a logical and moderate extension of the court's current authority.

Remedies like the professional license sanction differ fundamentally from typical support enforcement tools, such as income withholding. They are attention-getters – and quite effective in that role. It is important to note that the goal is not to deny or revoke the support debtor's license. It is to encourage the parent to pay support voluntarily, so that the sanction need never be imposed.

Self-employed parents pose special challenges for support enforcement. Sanctions against licenses, which do not depend upon the parent having an employer, are especially helpful in those cases. This measure will increase our ability to persuade a self-employed professional to voluntarily pay child support, to the ultimate benefit of the child.

This measure creates no new costs for the CSE program, but we believe it will produce a moderate increase of collections in a challenging segment of our caseload. Because the measure is not limited to our SRS cases, it may also help Kansas families avoid the need for our services or for public assistance. For these reasons, we encourage you to support House Bill 2201.

Thank you.