



Strong Families Make a Strong Kansas

House Health & Human Services Committee

February 10, 2016

Testimony on:

HB 2607

Written Testimony by:

Sandra Kimmons

Director, Economic & Employment Services

Kansas Department for Children and Families

Testimony of:

Sandra Kimmons, Director of Economic & Employment Services
Kansas Department for Children and Families
Topeka, Kansas

Testimony on:

HB 2607

Chairman Hawkins, Vice-Chair Dove, Ranking Member Ward, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide supporting testimony regarding HB 2607.

The Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) administers the Child Care and Development Block Grant in Kansas. The grant funds not only provide Child Care Subsidy benefits administered by DCF but also support the child care licensing program administered by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE).

HB 2607 establishes the authority and requirement for KDHE to complete a background check of sexual offender registries and child abuse and neglect registries in other states. The safety of Kansas children is paramount to DCF on a variety of levels. In order for parents to be employed, they must know that their child is in a safe place and being cared for appropriately. The ramifications of authorizing a person to be a child care provider when the person is on a sex offender or child abuse registry in any state is too great. A check of other states' registries will be minimal compared with the consequences of enrolling a sexual offender as a child care provider in Kansas.

In November 2014, Congress passed the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. The Act requires states to complete background checks on potential child care providers, child care staff members (including contract employees or self-employed individuals) and any individual living in a family care home. The background check is to include a search of the state sex offender registry or repository and the state child abuse and neglect registry and database where the staff member resides and resided during the previous five years. DCF and KDHE are partnering to ensure these background requirements will be met.

DCF stands in support of HB 2607. Thank you for the opportunity to address this important issue.