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March 3, 2015

Linda Herrick
KANSAS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. Herrick:

I'm writing to oppose House Bill 2381. My objection is based on experience garnered by working for New Beginnings, a successful homeless organization here in Reno County.

Our goal through two stages of transitional housing is to create self-sufficient individuals and families. We have been 80% successful in raising income among the population we serve. But this doesn't happen in a hurry. Multiple issues must be addressed to provide the stability necessary for a homeless family to become, ultimately, tax-paying members of our community.

To accomplish this, we rely on other services to provide necessary support to our clients. DCF is a huge part of that. I was asked to speak at the Hutchinson celebration of SRS 35th Anniversary Celebration. I praised the collaboration between our mission and the hard-working people at the Hutch office.

This successful collaboration is in jeopardy due to these punitive bills coming from the House and Senate. The goal seems punishment rather than positive support. I could dissect each point of the bill, but want to be brief. Life is an experiential plane; we learn from mistakes. But in Kansas, mistakes are an excuse to hang a Scarlet Letter on a person for the rest of their life. Example: denying a Felon food assistance? Really? They are Felons, but they are also human beings needing help to overcome their mistakes. This is just one example of a bill that in its totality is punitive and cruel.

Any time you wish to discuss these matters, my phone number is: 620-960-4515.

We are dedicated to the humane treatment of our fellow citizens.

This bill is dedicated to the opposite.

Sincerely,

Jim Kanady

Sheltering & Rebuilding Human Lives and Fostering of Affordable Housing