

## MINUTES OF THE HOUSE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Daniel Hawkins at 1:30pm on Thursday, February 12, 2015, 546-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Representative Barbara Bollier – Excused

Committee staff present:

Scott Abbott, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Jennifer Ouellette, Legislative Research Department

Patrick Orr, Kansas Legislative Committee Assistant

Erica Haas, Legislative Research Department

Norm Furse, Office of Revisor of Statutes

Conferees appearing before the Committee:

Marc Rhoades, Kansas state representative from 72nd district; Dr. David Anderson, founder Safe Families for Children; Kate & Randy Barth, parents who have hosted children; Kathryn, placing parent; Andrew Brown, senior fellow with Foundation for Government Accountability; Sue Smith, licensed social worker from Topeka, Kansas; Scott Abbott, staff revisor

Others in attendance:

[See Attached List](#)

### **Hearing on: HB2244 — The safe families act.**

Chairman Hawkins opened the hearing on **HB2244**. Scott Abbott, staff revisor, gave an overview of the bill.

Chairman Hawkins opened the hearing for proponents.

Representative Rhoades, state representative from the 72nd district testified he felt the need to be involved in a greater way with troubled families and kids in Newton and in Kansas. He became exposed to Safe Families and Dr. Anderson, and he felt that he had probably found the answer to his dilemma through Safe Families. He stood for questions from the committee. ([Attachment 1](#)) ([Attachment 2](#)) ([Attachment 3](#))

Dr David Anderson is a clinical psychologist from Chicago, Illinois who founded Safe Families for Children in 2003. Since then, the organization has placed over 17,000 children in host homes without incidents. Safe Families is a volunteer movement that gives hope and support to families in distress. Parents voluntarily place their children in safe, loving homes where they are cared for while the parents seek to restore stability in their lives. Safe Families works because it is substitute care, parents place their children voluntarily and retain full legal custody of their children, host families understand the temporary nature of their role, and they are motivated by care and concern without financial reward. Dr. Anderson stood for questions from the committee. ([Attachment 4](#))

## CONTINUATION SHEET

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Kate and Randy Barth are hosting parents who love the mission behind Safe Families. They have hosted nine children over fifteen months and believe strongly in this program. They stood for questions from the committee. ([Attachment 5](#))

Kathryn is a placing parent who needed help. She heard about Safe Families but was reluctant at first to use the program. She needed a safe family to care for her daughter while she went through labor then when she was applying for jobs. She cannot thank them enough for what they have done for her family. She stood for questions from the committee. ([Attachment 6](#))

Andrew Brown is a senior fellow with the Foundation for Government Accountability which is a nonpartisan organization focused on promoting better lives for individuals and families through improving health and welfare programs nationwide. He is a strong proponent of Safe Families because parents retain full legal and parental rights of their children. Delegation of power is completely voluntary so the placement is not defined as foster care. **HB2244 and SB148** both give families a way to ensure their children are cared for during times of temporary challenge or crisis. He then stood for questions from the committee. ([Attachment 7](#))

Sue Smith is a licensed social worker in Topeka, Kansas. She works with Lifeline Children's Services which is the licensed child placing agency for Safe Families in Topeka. Host families come from a variety of places depending on their first introduction to the program. The organization cast the net wide to give strong families the opportunity to care for others through hospitality and compassion. Potential host families must undergo a home assessment and complete training before they are allowed to host children. Lifeline does not see a child as a statistic but as a face who needs help. She stood for questions from the committee. ([Attachment 8](#))

Proponents who submitted written testimony were:

Senator Mary Pilcher Cook, Kansas state senator from the 10th District and chairperson of the Senate Public Health and Welfare committee ([Attachment 9](#))

Phyllis Gilmore, Secretary of Kansas Department of Children and Families ([Attachment 10](#))

There were no opponents or neutral parties to testify on behalf of this bill.

Chairman Hawkins closed the hearing on **HB2244**.

### **Discussion & possible action on: HB2032 — Relating to diabetes information reporting.**

Chairman Hawkins called for final action on HB2032. Norm Furse, staff revisor, gave an overview of the bill.

Representative Ward made a motion to move HB2032 out favorably for passage. Representative Wilson seconded. Discussion ensued. Representative Edmonds proposed an amendment to strike out the word "shall" on page 1 line 4 and replace with "may." Representative Hill seconded. Discussion ensued.

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Unless specifically noted, the individual remarks recorded herein have not been transcribed verbatim. Individual remarks as reported herein have not been submitted to the individuals appearing before the committee for editing or corrections.

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Motion carried.

Representative Ward moved that the committee pass out **HB2032** as amended favorably for passage.  
Representative Houston seconded. Discussion ensued. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.