

STATE OF KANSAS
SENATE

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CHASE BLASI
27TH DISTRICT

Dear Chairwoman Caryn Tyson and Members of the Senate Assessment and Taxation Committee:

I respectfully ask for your support for SB147: Increasing the income tax credit amount for adoption expenses and making the credit refundable.

As many of you know, my wife McKenna and I have grown our family by adopting two wonderful boys – who we proudly call our sons. We looked at foster care before deciding to seek private adoption. We decided foster care was not the best path for us due to reintegration being the goal for each child in care of the state. We spoke to several couples who shared their experience being foster parents and their desire to adopt the children in their care – only to see years long wait and little success on finalizing adoption.

McKenna and I then pursued private adoption. Again we spoke to several couples who adopted who gave us great counsel. I would argue the greatest anxiety for adoptive parents is the unknown. A couple conceiving a child has nine months to prepare both mentally and physically for the child to come into the home. Adoptive parents often have only hours or days to prepare. That was the case for both of our adoptions, we had only hours to prepare.

On top of wondering who the child will be, the child's age, needs, and how quickly to move for placement, a great concern is how much is it going to cost. Each adoption is unique and therefore cannot be compared to the next.

We were told to prepare to spend \$25,000-30,000 for adoption. Kansas KVC Health Systems says prepare to spend \$20,000-50,000.¹ Furthermore, Adoption Families Magazine cited that adoption in 2016-2017 could cost over \$43,000 on average.²

¹ Kansas KVC Health Systems. *How Much Does Adoption Cost?* (2022) <https://kansas.kvc.org/2022/08/19/how-much-does-adoption-cost/>

² Adoptive Families. *Adoption Cost and Timing in 2016-2017* <https://www.adoptivefamilies.com/resources/adoption-news/adoption-cost-timing-2016-2017-survey-results/>

U.S. Newborn (Agency) – Average Cost Breakdown

Home study fee	\$2,433
Document preparation & authentication	\$595
Adoption agency application & program fees	\$18,826
Adoption consultant fees	\$2,637
Attorney fees	\$4,435
Advertising/networking	\$2,067
Birth family counseling	\$1,345
Birth mother expenses	\$3,411
Foster/interim care	\$282
Travel expenses	\$2,263
Post-placement expenses	\$2,076
All other expenses	\$2,869
AVERAGE TOTAL**	\$43,239

** Average represents total costs before claiming the Adoption Tax Credit.

The largest costs to adoptive families will be agency fees and attorneys. The federal tax credit was created to help offset some of those costs. Currently both federal and state credits are non-refundable and can be carried over. However, that can be a challenge to young families who just witnessed their savings emptied. That is why this legislation provides for a 100% state refundable tax credit based on the federal credit.

In 2023, the federal non-refundable adoption tax credit is \$15,950. This legislation provides for the State of Kansas to mirror 100% of the credit at a refundable rate. This will assist families in offsetting costs immediately. This will help young families provide for the new child as they take on new costs such as childcare, diapers, medical bills, etc.

Adoption is a beautiful gift for both the child(ren) and parent(s). However, the cost to adopt is the greatest challenge facing prospective parents.

Let it be known that the State of Kansas welcomes and encourages adoption. Each desiring Kansan deserves the opportunity to give a child-in-need hope and a bright future by providing a warm loving home without financial hindrance. This legislation makes adoption a reality for so many Kansans and gives a future to so many children.