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**Testimony by Jamie Downs with the Butler County Health Department to
Senate Committee on Commerce
Written-Only Opposition on SB 282 • March 8, 2023**

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,
Thank you for the opportunity to provide opposing testimony in writing regarding Senate Bill 282, a bill relating to childcare licensing requirements. The Butler County Health Department is a public health department that has inspected childcare facilities for over forty (40) years.

I have concerns with the proposed changes in Section 12 that would mandate all inspections be via KDHE staff. KDHE is already understaffed and overworked. This change could exacerbate the situation. I understand this legislation would allow KDHE to hire the local surveyor. For counties, like mine, where the surveyor fills multiple roles, they may not be interested in leaving their current position. For those who choose to stay, they could see a cut in hours due to losing the Child Care grant.

This legislation, if passed, would be costly for KDHE. There would be the cost to provide computers, MiFis and cell phones for each inspector hired. Currently, for my county, my surveyor's benefits are divided among several programs. If KDHE has to hire the surveyors, they would be responsible for the full cost of benefits.

I am also concerned about the ramifications of severing local relationships that presently exist with this sort of state-level takeover of the licensing inspection role. I have been engaged in this work for thirty (30) years and have established relationships with my communities' child care providers and I have concerns this alteration may compromise the present level of service provided via local means.

Thank you for reading my concerns relating to SB 282.

Sincerely,

Jamie Downs
Director, Butler County Health Department

Jamie Downs, Administrator

Mission Statement: To protect the public's health and environment, prevent disease and promote wellness