



Kansas Children's Service League

Stronger families start here.

Senate Committee on Health and Public Welfare

SB 489

Written Testimony

February 19, 2024

Thank you Chair Gossage, Vice Chair Erickson, Ranking Minority Member Pettey and Committee Members for the opportunity to provide written neutral testimony of SB 234. Kansas Children's Service League (KCSL) is a statewide private, non-profit, 501(c)3 serving children and their families. We are the Kansas Chapter for Prevent Child Abuse America.

Childhood adversity includes abuse and neglect as well as other household dysfunctions. The childhood trauma stemming from adversity can have a profound impact on social connections, school readiness, and an increased likelihood of developing negative coping mechanisms. One of those adverse experiences is separation from a parent. We know bonding and attachment is a protective or mitigating factor for a child. If a child has that protective factor during their first three years of life, they are more likely to maneuver through future challenges in their life in a helpful and productive way.

KCSL has also watched transformational change occur with parents when they have the opportunity to learn a new path. And the research is clear parents are most willing to change their behaviors or learn a new path when their child is an infant. This program will have the opportunity to provide transformational change with the incarcerated mothers. This has come to fruition in other states where they have experienced a decrease in recidivism. Further those states have been able to successfully reduce the rate of violence among the residents of the program-after all they are learning to care for a human being in an environment that will help coach and guide them.

KCSL is in support of SB 489, which would establish the crisis nursery program for incarcerated parents.

Thank you for considering this program which can have a large impact on our communities.

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