

February 11, 2025

I am a proponent of HB2339, which enhances the adult homecare workforce.

Intergenerational Childcare Fund for Adult Care Home Providers

The intergenerational interactions occurring on the Schowalter Villa campus through the childcare we offer are a lifeline for all who live and work here. They bring joy, energy, life, and meaningful connection. The relationships established reduce the stigma of aging and make our long-term care facility an approachable and friendly place to be. Employees take jobs at Schowalter Villa because they have the ease of bringing their children to work and picking them up when they leave. Nursing mothers take breaks from their jobs in dining, front desk, and housekeeping duties to feed their children.

Schowalter Villa serves over 400 residents and nearly 300 employees. In 2005, the Hesston Community Childcare was established on our campus. Its building was annexed to our long-term care and assisted living building. Residents and children interact daily and additionally can be seen playing on their play equipment and in classrooms. The children of many employees are enrolled at HCC. The childcare annex is in major need of carpet, paint, and basic upgrades. In addition, supplies are at a shortage and need updates. Resources are extremely limited, as all fees are put back into paychecks for teachers, a necessity to keep staff.

We'd kindly request you support the passage of the Intergenerational Childcare Fund, which would significantly impact quality of care for children, offer incentives to work in long term care for our staff, and enhance intergenerational interactions for our residents.

Modifying the Nurse Service Scholarship Act for Part-time Students

As you know, over 85% of nursing facilities in the state have increased wages and over 50% have offered sign-on bonuses. However fair wages and incentives aren't enough, we must make sure that all students with a heart for service work in our facilities are able to get the education they need to be qualified as workers.

Many of our staff need to work full-time in our facility while enrolled part time in nursing school to make ends meet at home. The cost of rent, food, health insurance, and for some – childcare – are mounting as we speak. It is not affordable for them to be full-time students. What's more, we need them in our facilities as much as possible to meet our workforce demands.

We kindly request you support the modification to allow part-time students to be eligible for the Nurse Service Scholarship. It will undoubtedly change the lives of the precious elders I serve in my profession by allowing them to be cared for while future nurses complete their education.

Thank you for your consideration and your service to our state.



Sincerely,

Tonya Keim
Bluestem Communities

