



# Testimony in Support of HB 2360

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House Committee on Welfare Reform

February 11, 2025

Steven Greene, on behalf of, Opportunity Solutions Project

Good morning, Chairman Averkamp and members of the committee. My name is Steven Greene and I'm here to encourage support for House Bill 2360 on behalf of Opportunity Solutions Project, a non-profit advocacy organization that seeks to improve lives through free enterprise, individual liberty, and a limited, accountable government.

The reforms in this bill have a simple goal: to get the right benefits to the right people receiving public assistance. The underlying principle is to ensure that benefits go to those who qualify, while strengthening policy related to eligibility and accurate redetermination of benefits.

According to the most recent report from the federal Kansas has an error rate in food stamps of more than 12 percent.<sup>1</sup> That's worse than the national average and worse than each of Kansas's neighbors: Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma.<sup>2</sup>

The high error rate is no accident. Kansas doesn't require households to report changes between recertifications unless the change makes them fully ineligible.<sup>3</sup>

Ultimately, high improper payment rates cost Kansans.

In addition, this bill addresses program integrity by requiring more frequent cross-checks for various state public assistance programs. By requiring monthly data cross-checks for public assistance programs e.g. enrollment against death, lottery, incarceration records, and potential changes in residency, and quarterly cross-checks against wages, tax, and income records, Kansas can strengthen its safety net and remove ineligible individuals, bringing the focus back to those with a true need. When someone dies, they should no longer receive public assistance. And when someone moves to another state, they should stop receiving benefits from that state they were issued.

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<sup>1</sup> Food and Nutrition Service, "Supplemental nutrition assistance program: payment error rates fiscal year 2023," U.S. Department of Agriculture (2023), <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/snap-fy23-qc-payment-error-rate.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Food and Nutrition Service, "State Options Report," U.S. Department of Agriculture (2024), <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/snap-16th-state-options-report-june24.pdf>.

Many other states, including Arkansas, Florida, and Oklahoma, have taken action to apply these commonsense checks.<sup>4-5-6</sup>

The good news is that Kansas already has these records. This bill simply says: Check those lists against the list of households receiving public assistance and make sure folks are still eligible.

And by cross-checking data from federal sources, Kansas can get a better picture of its enrollees, including those from other states who might be taking advantage of the program in Kansas. Other states already do this. States like Iowa, Nebraska, Ohio, and Oklahoma cross-check federal databases to ensure the integrity of their public assistance programs.<sup>7-8-9-10</sup>

This bill puts Kansas on a more sustainable path. Using commonsense data checks, this bill will help strengthen the program, defend taxpayer dollars, and protect the truly needy receiving benefits.

Thank you for allowing me to provide proponent testimony regarding HB 2360 and I am happy to answer questions at the appropriate time. Thank you.

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<sup>4</sup> A.C.A. § 20-76-215(c).

<sup>5</sup> Fla. Admin. Code R. 65A-1.205(6)(a).

<sup>6</sup> O.A.C. § 340:65-3-4.

<sup>7</sup> Iowa Code § 239.4(2).

<sup>8</sup> Nebraska Admin. Code, Title 475, Ch. 2, § 003.02.

<sup>9</sup> ORC Ann. 4141.162(4) and OAC Ann. 5101:4-7-09.

<sup>10</sup> O.A.C. § 340:65-3-1(e)(2)(B), O.A.C. § 340:65-3-4(4).