



House Committee on Judiciary

February 23, 2015

Testimony on:

HB 2277

Written Testimony By:

Phyllis Gilmore

Secretary

Kansas Department for Children and Families

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Testimony of:

Phyllis Gilmore, Secretary
Kansas Department for Children and Families
Topeka, Kansas

Testimony on:

HB 2277, Kansas Child Protection Registry Act

Chairman Barker, Vice-Chair Macheers, Ranking Minority Member Carmichael and Committee Members:

HB 2277 proposes the establishment of the Kansas Child Protection Registry Act. Communications as defined in the proposed bill would be transmitted to a "contact point," as defined, regarding material or performance deemed to be "harmful to minors," as defined.

The Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) currently maintains the Kansas Child Abuse and Neglect Registry. The names of any and all persons who are substantiated as perpetrators of abuse or neglect of children are placed on this registry.

Pursuant to K.S.A. 65-516, "persons who have committed an act of physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect or sexual abuse and listed in the child abuse and neglect registry maintained by the Kansas department for children and families" are prohibited from residing, working or volunteering at child care facilities.

Substantively, the proposed act purports to establish a process which would contribute to the increased protection and prevention of harm to children in this state. DCF is concerned with confusion that may ensue due to the similarity of names: "Kansas Child Protection Registry" and "Kansas Child Abuse and Neglect Registry" and the purposes of each registry. The purpose, role and process relating to the existing Kansas Child Abuse and Neglect Registry are well established. It is important for the ongoing protection of children that the public not be confused about the process and agency with which to submit requests for abuse and neglect registry checks.

DCF would propose the legislators ensure there is clarity as to what is to be reported and to whom.

Reports of alleged abuse and neglect are currently reported to DCF's Kansas Protection Report Center (KPRC), orally, in writing, by facsimile and email/online. It is vital the public have clarity with respect to processes and systems established to protect and serve children about whom reports are made to the KPRC.

DCF is neutral to HB 2277. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony about this proposed legislation.