



Testimony in favor of House Bill 2516

Senator Wilborn and Committee Members:

My name is Teresa Taylor, and I am providing this testimony on behalf of the Safe Kids Kansas coalition and the Kansas Emergency Nurses Association (KENA). These organizations are in favor of HB 2516, "providing immunity from civil liability for damage to a motor vehicle related to the rescue of a person or animal."

Safe Kids Kansas is a network of partners and local coalitions across the state dedicated to preventing childhood injury. The leading cause of non-crash, vehicle related deaths for children is heatstroke, also known as hyperthermia. This occurs when the body isn't able to cool itself quickly enough and the body temperature rises to dangerous levels. Young children are particularly at risk as their bodies heat up three to five times faster than adult bodies. The inside of a car can heat up 19 degrees in a matter of 10 minutes. When a child's internal temperature reaches 104 degrees, major organs begin to shut down; at 107 degrees, the child can die. Every second a child is left in a hot car is detrimental. Unfortunately, child vehicular heatstroke deaths are rapidly rising.

The Kansas Emergency Nurses Association is also active in preventing injuries in Kansas. Unfortunately, nurses from across the state have seen the devastating effects of hyperthermia in children left alone in hot vehicles. These injuries and deaths will be reduced if children are rescued as soon as they are discovered, thereby reversing the rapidly progressing hyperthermia, followed by immediate initiation of medical care.

It is the hope of both Safe Kids Kansas and Kansas Emergency Nurses Association and that the protection offered in this legislation will alleviate worries of litigation regarding damage to a vehicle. In turn, we believe community members will be more willing to remove a child from the danger of a hot vehicle. Ultimately, we believe this will result in lives saved.

We urge you to support HB 2516. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa Taylor".

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