



**Public Health and Welfare Committee
In support of Senate Bill 126
Testimony of Diana Schunn, Executive Director
Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County**

February 6, 2017

Chairwoman Schmidt and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share our support of SB126 regarding background checks for day care facilities.

The Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County (CACSC) was founded on the belief that no single agency can serve and treat child abuse—a multidisciplinary team response is necessary. Community involvement is necessary to provide protection to children. Day Care Facilities play an integral role in providing a safe and supportive environment for children.

Our agency served 1,935 child victims of abuse in 2016 where 68% experienced sexual abuse and 16% experienced physical abuse. Of the 1,935 children 33% were ages 7-12 years and 33% were ages 0-6. Clearly abuse is occurring to children who are cared for in a day care setting. Many of our reported cases do not necessarily involve the day care owner as the offender but rather someone who lives with the owner or is volunteering in some capacity for the owner.

The passing of this legislation will further define obvious limitations designed to protect children in child care facilities. Prior actions are often direct indicators to future actions. If a person is on the sex offender registry, in this state or others, the registry alone should disqualify the person from working or volunteering in a day care setting as this directly puts our most vulnerable at a high risk.

Having been in healthcare and forensic nursing for over 20 years and spending the past nine with the Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County, I have had the opportunity to assist in provision and coordination of services for victims of child abuse. This bill moves us in the right direction of increasing protection through decreasing access to children by potential offenders. Again, I support and encourage movement forward with this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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