

Feb.18th 2019

Senator Hardy and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for consideration of this bill. As grandparents with guardianship of two grandchildren I see great value in this bill. My name is Gayle Pfannenstiel(56) and my husband is Vince(61). We have four children, Alex (30), Luke(22), Noah(19), and Grace(16). Alex is the father of our two grandchildren, Briley(9) and Bradley(6). In August of 2015 the children's mother took Briley and Bradley, left our son in Tulsa Oklahoma, and moved temporarily into our house with us in Salina. She lived here with the kids for three months before getting a place of her own through public housing, (Nov. 2015). On April 16th, 2016 she called us asking us to take the children while she tried to get her life together. A series of poor choices and drug addiction were making it impossible for her to provide care for the children. My husband and I opened up our home to our two grandchildren who were 3 and 6 at the time. We felt that having them live with us was a better choice than sending them into the foster care system. Since that time we have provided them with food, clothing, school supplies, medical care, and any other need they may have without any assistance. Over the years my husband has worked at steady job plus overtime here in Salina to make it so I can stay at home with our kids. Now with the grandchildren her we do our best to make ends meet but we don't have anything extra. We have to pick and choose the activities that the children can participate in because we don't qualify for any reductions. We pay full price for school lunches, sports and recreation activities, etc. If the children had been put in foster care they would qualify for all of these benefits. Had they stayed with their mom they also would have qualified but we were concerned for their safety and well being. We have three college or close to college age children. We are trying to manage this household with various ages and various needs and not find ourselves in a financial dilemma. This past August our 21 year old son was diagnosed with Stage 4 Hodgkin's Lymphoma. He has had to be at home while he goes through his treatments, sitting out his senior year at Kansas State. This has created extra medical expenses. To have this bill go through and be able to have a little financial help would ease a lot of burden for us as it appears we will be keeping the children for quite some time. I would liked to have been presented this matter to you today in person but cannot be there due to my responsibilities to my children and grandchildren.

Thank you, Gayle Pfannenstiel

