



**Proponent Testimony on SB497 – Written Only
Senate Committee on Judiciary
February 16, 2022**

Chair Warren, Vice Chair Wilborn, Ranking Member Haley, and Members of the Committee, my name is Shanna Jager, Executive Director of Public Policy at the Children's Alliance of Kansas. The Alliance is an association of 21 private, non-profit child welfare agencies that collectively provide a full array of services for children and families in child abuse and neglect prevention, family preservation, foster care, adoption, independent living, and parent, youth, and child skill-building, mental health, and substance use treatment. We also host an array of child welfare workforce and foster parent training programs. Thank you for the opportunity to express our interest in and support of SB497.

We commend the work of the Kansas Attorney General's Office for their coordination of statewide Human Trafficking training for law enforcement and we are in support a more coordinated approach to human trafficking awareness for professionals, when it meets their needs and does not become burdensome to their respective agencies. Given the complexities of our work, we would request child welfare professionals to be involved in the development of such training efforts. Many of our member agencies have developed extremely competent, trauma-informed, researched-based approaches to working with youth who have been trafficked and have demonstrated successful outcomes working with these young people.

At the Alliance, we value high-quality, stakeholder involved training programs. Very recently, in partnership with DCF, the Human Trafficking Advisory Board Victim Services Subcommittee, and human trafficking experts in Kansas, we began working towards a standard statewide training program for foster parents on awareness and identification of human trafficking that would better equip caregivers with skills to address the needs of youth either at risk of or survivors of sex and/or labor exploitation.

We encourage this Committee to consider how the contemplated cross-discipline annual training effort will be delivered for such a large workforce—perhaps online, on demand courses may be considered. Additionally, we would be happy to work with the Attorney General's office to ensure that any annual training for child welfare or clinical level staff is designed with awareness of the existing training options for various skill levels, ranging from entry-level support workers, all the way through licensed clinicians who have extensive experience supporting survivors of human trafficking.

We thank the Committee for their dedication to such a critical and sensitive topic and for allowing us to share our support for SB497.

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Members of the Children's Alliance of Kansas:

The Bridge of Topeka, Topeka
CALM, Emporia
Cornerstones of Care, Overland Park
DCCCA, Lawrence
Eckerd, Wichita
EmberHope, Wichita
Florence Crittenton, Topeka
Foster the Cause, Topeka
FosterAdopt Connect, Olathe
Gathered, Derby
Great Circle, Lawrence

Kansas Children's Service League, Topeka
KVC Kansas, Olathe
KidsTLC, Olathe
Restoration Family Services, Wichita
Saint Francis Ministries, Salina
TFI Family Services, Topeka
O'Connell Children's Shelter, Lawrence
The Villages, Topeka
Wichita Children's Home, Wichita
Zoe's House, Kansas City