



March 3, 2022

Adrienne Olejnik, Vice President
Kansas Action for Children
Proponent Testimony for SB 155
Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare

Chairman Hilderbrand and members of the Committee:

Today, we share our support for SB 155, which increases the Newborn Screening Program's capitation limit from \$2.5 million to \$5.0 million, as well as updates outdated terminology in statute. This would make permanent a proviso that has been included in several of the past years' budgets, providing necessary resources to continue a critical public health program and allow for future growth as new conditions are identified.

The Newborn Screening Program (NSP) currently screens more than 38,000 Kansas newborns each year for 34 different genetic or metabolic conditions, hearing loss, and critical heart defects. These conditions are undetectable at birth without screening. Early diagnosis and treatment give these newborns the best chance at healthy development. If left undetected and untreated, many of these conditions can lead to lifelong medical treatments and high costs, as well as serious complications like brain damage and death.

As new conditions are identified, the list of recommended screenings continues to grow. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Recommended Uniform Screening Panel (RUSP) currently recommends screening for 35 conditions; at least three more will be added in the future.

Over the past several years, Kansas has added five conditions to the NSP, but with the capitation in place, resources are already exceeding the statutory cap. The recent budget provisos have allowed the program to temporarily meet the increased costs. The increased cap will allow additional funds to be allocated, as needed, from the medical assistance fee fund. The NSP is mandated by law to not assess fees to providers or families, keeping the program universal for all Kansas newborns and their families. **Making this change doesn't necessarily mean that the NSP's budget will be increased to \$5 million. Instead, it gives the program flexibility to respond in the future.**

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support of SB 155, and please do not hesitate to contact me at adrienne@kac.org if you have any questions.