



Testimony – SB 155
Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee
March 3, 2022

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

Kansas was a pioneer in establishing a comprehensive system to support children's needs – as both the first state in the nation to establish a Children's Trust Fund in 1980, and as the first state in the nation to establish a Children's Cabinet (supported by our state share of the Master Tobacco Settlement funds) to help meet the needs of children and families. K.S.A. 38-1901 and 38-2101 through 38-2105 created the Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund and established the Kansas Endowment for Youth and the Children's Initiatives Fund in 1999.

In 2014, the Children's Cabinet adopted the "Blueprint for Early Childhood" which we continue to follow today. The Blueprint focuses on three key categories – Healthy Development, Strong Families and Early Learning. The Children's Cabinet uses the Blueprint to guide our investments and inform decision-making related to the CIF portfolio.

The Children's Cabinet recognizes the crucial role developmental and health screenings play in early detection and intervention. The sooner we can identify issues, the sooner we can connect children and their families to the support needed. Research clearly shows that with early intervention and treatment, we can help ensure every child has the best possible start in life. In the case of the Newborn Screening program, it can mean the difference between life and death. We urge you to pass this bill to ensure the screenings necessary are available to meet the needs of all Kansas families.

Thank you for allowing me to provide written testimony in support of SB 155.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melissa Rooker".

Melissa Rooker

Executive Director

Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund.