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**Testimony presented to the  
House Transportation Committee  
House Bill 2680  
February 14, 2024**

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Chairman Francis and members of the House Transportation Committee, Safe Kids Kansas is pleased to provide testimony in support of HB 2680. Safe Kids Kansas is a nonprofit coalition of partnering agencies, organizations and businesses, whose mission is to prevent unintentional injuries and injury-related death to Kansas children.

Summary of Issue and Position:

Within minutes the inside of a vehicle can reach dangerous temperatures, even on a pleasant Kansas day. A vehicle can heat up 19 degrees above the outside temperature in just the first 10 minutes, and cracking a window has very little effect on cooling the inside temperature of the vehicle. Children are at increased susceptibility from heatstroke, as their bodies heat up 3-5 times faster than an adult. For young children who may be left in a vehicle by a caregiver, this can have deadly consequences.

On average, 38 childhood heatstroke fatalities occur each year across the U.S. That's an average of one child every 10 days. In addition to heatstroke, there are other potential dangers when children are left alone in a vehicle. These hazards can include injuries from children putting the vehicle into gear, or even the possibility of a child abduction. To help prevent these tragedies and reduce the risk of injury, HB 2680 proposes penalties for drivers who intentionally leave children unattended in motor vehicles. These fines can provide a deterrent to drivers who may consider leaving children behind in the vehicle and help increase awareness of the dangers of hyperthermia and other risks to vulnerable children in vehicles. For purpose of this bill, we define vulnerable children as those ages 8 years and younger.

We know that many adults simply do not know how dangerous the inside of a parked vehicle can be and in such a short amount of time, and therefore may believe they can safely leave a child alone for "just a few minutes." As childhood safety professionals, we work to educate the public about these dangers and how to prevent tragedies and the suffering of families. HB 2680 will help to elevate awareness, penalize those who intentionally leave children unattended and place them at risk, and save the lives of Kansas children.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

Attachments: Safe Kids Kansas Member Organizations, Safe Kids Worldwide A-C-T





## Safe Kids Kansas Member Organizations

AAA Kansas  
American Academy of Pediatrics – Kansas Chapter  
Brain Injury Association of Kansas  
Charlie’s House  
Children’s Mercy Hospital  
Child Care Aware of Kansas  
Dillon’s Stores  
Eye Care Council  
Fire Education Association of Kansas (FEAK)  
Huggable Images  
Kansas Academy of Family Physicians  
Kansas Alliance of YMCAs  
Kansas Association for Justice  
Kansas Association of Counties  
Kansas Association of Local Health Departments (KALHD)  
Kansas Association of Osteopathic Medicine  
Kansas Association of School Boards (KASB)  
Kansas Board of Emergency Medical Services  
Kansas Children’s Cabinet & Trust Fund  
Kansas Chiropractic Association  
Kansas Cooperative Extension 4-H  
Kansas Dental Association  
Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF)  
Kansas Department of Health & Environment (KDHE):  
    Bureau of Health Promotion  
    Bureau of Family Health  
    Childhood Lead Poison Prevention Program  
    Trauma Program  
    EMS for Children (EMSC)  
Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL)  
Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT)  
Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks (KDWP)  
Kansas Emergency Nurses Association (KENA)  
Kansas Healthy Start Home Visitor Services  
Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP)  
Kansas Hospital Association (KHA)  
Kansas Insurance Department  
Kansas Medical Society (KMS)  
Kansas Motor Carriers Association (KMCA)  
Kansas National Education Association (KNEA)  
Kansas Operation Lifesaver  
Kansas Parent Teachers Association (Kansas PTA)  
Kansas Poison Center  
Kansas Public Health Association (KPHA)

Kansas School Nurses Organization (KSNO)  
Kansas State Association of Fire Chiefs  
Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE)  
Kansas State Child Death Review Board  
Kansas State Firefighters Association  
Kansas State Nurses Association  
Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office (KTSRO)  
KIDS Network  
Kids and Car Safety (formerly KidsAndCars.org)  
University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC):  
    Burn Center  
    Emergency Services  
    Trauma Services  
National Highway Transportation Safety Administration  
    (NHTSA) Regional Office  
Office of the Governor – Constituent Services  
Office of the State Fire Marshal  
Safety & Health Council of Western MO & KS  
Salina Educational Automotive Museum of America (dba  
    The Garage)  
State Capitol Area Fire Fighters Association  
State Farm Insurance Companies  
Stormont-Vail Health  
United School Administrators of Kansas  
Ascension Via Christi  
    St. Francis Burn Center  
    Trauma Center  
Wesley Medical Center  
YMCA of Topeka

Last updated January 2024





**PARK. LOOK. LOCK.**



Never leave a child alone in a car.  
Remember to A-C-T.



### **A** Avoid Heatstroke

Avoid heatstroke-related injury and death by never leaving a child alone in a car, not even for a minute. And make sure to keep your car locked when you're not inside so kids don't get in on their own.



### **C** Create Reminders

Keep a stuffed animal or other memento in your child's car seat when it's empty, and move it to the front seat as a visual reminder when your child is in the back seat. Or place and secure your phone, briefcase or purse in the backseat when traveling with your child.



### **T** Take Action

If you see a child alone in a car, call 911. Emergency personnel want you to call. They are trained to respond to these situations.

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K:DS  
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