

January 30, 2023

Chair Concannon, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Ousley, and Members of the Committee, my name is Rachelle Roosevelt, Sr. Vice President of Permanency for TFI Family Services, Inc. TFI is private, not-for-profit agency providing a wide range of child welfare and behavioral health services throughout Kansas. Our mission is Devoted to the Strength of Family. TFI's current services include early intervention to maintain and strengthen families, foster care in both family and residential settings, adoption support, independent living services, aftercare, and case management services for youth and families in the child welfare system. In addition, our full range of behavioral health services include outpatient treatment and residential services via our Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) and Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP). TFI employs over 515 staff throughout the state of Kansas. We currently have 445 foster homes and serve approximately 1720 children in our case management and child placing agency grants. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB2194.

TFI Family Services, Inc. support HB2194, the Representative Gail Finney foster care bill of rights. We believe both youth in foster care and foster parents in Kansas need a clear statement of their rights. Youth need information and to feel empowered to ask questions and advocate for their voices to be heard and their opinions and desires to be considered.

HB2194 would affirm foster youth have the right to:

- Live in the least restrictive environment
- Stay with siblings when possible
- Have as few placements as possible
- Access to education and more

Foster parents are important partners in the Kansas child welfare system that directly care for the emotional, physical, and nurturing needs of youth. A Kansas statement of legislative support for foster parent rights can enhance foster parent recruitment and retention, which is critically important for serving youth in foster care.

HB2194 would affirm foster parents have the right to:

- Respect and trust as a primary provider of care
- Receive standardized preservice training
- Receive information that is relevant to the care of a child
- Communicate with members of the child's professional team and more

Thank you for the opportunity to share our support for HB2194.

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Pathway Family Services

An agency of TFI



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