



**Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska  
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**Testimony of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska  
to the Kansas Child Welfare and Foster Care House Committee  
in support of HB 2772 Regarding establishing the Kansas Indian Child Welfare Act**

February 19, 2024

Dear Chairperson Concannon and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to share the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska's support for House Bill 2772. I am Misty Slater, Chief of Staff representing the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska. We are a Federally Recognized Tribe located in Brown and Doniphan Counties in Kansas and Richardson County in Nebraska. We have almost 4900 tribal citizens living all throughout the state and the world.

The Indian Child Welfare Act, ICWA, has been a critical support for our Tribe's children, culture, sovereignty. Congressional findings from the passage of ICWA state "there is no resource that is more vital to the continued existence and integrity of Indian tribes than their children and... that an alarmingly high percentage of Indian families are broken up by the removal, often unwarranted, of their children from them by nontribal public and private agencies."

According to The Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), approximately 1% of children in the foster care system in Kansas are American Indian or Alaskan Native. In Kansas alone, we currently have 9 tribal children in either out-of-home placement or recently returned to parents from out-of-home placement. These are 9 young citizens who will maintain their ties to their family, their culture, their traditions, and their home. That impact is immeasurable to that child and our community.

This bill provides the State an opportunity to further strengthen the relationship with the Iowa Tribe and other Federally Recognized Tribes by emphasizing, as a matter of Kansas law, the important protections set forth in the legislation. This bill is of particular importance to my Tribe, as both the Iowa Tribe and the Sac and Fox Nation have Reservation boundaries that cross the Kansas border into Nebraska. This language mirrors the existing statute in Nebraska allowing our Social Services Department to have a more streamlined approach on both sides of the state line.

Thank you for the opportunity to share the perspective of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska and our support for HB 2772.