

Testimony by Eldonna Chesnut with the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) to the House Committee on Commerce, Labor, and Economic Development

Written Proponent for HB 2785 – March 6, 2024

Chairman Tarwater and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for allowing the Johnson County Department of Health and Environment (JCDHE) to provide written proponent testimony in support of HB 2785, which transfers certain child care programs to the Kansas office of early childhood and separating licensing duties between the secretary for health and environment and the executive director of early childhood. JCDHE's mission is to promote and protect the health and environment for all who live, work, and play in Johnson County.

We have monitored the work of the Early Childhood Transition Task Force over the past year and believe that they have done an excellent job researching, listening, and proposing recommendations that will support improvement in early childhood development and child care in Kansas. I was fortunate to hear a presentation at the First 1,000 Days Kansas Summit discussing other states that have made similar changes. The speaker shared that this is a national trend. He stated out of the many states to make this transition that almost all found it to be an efficient, successful change for children and families.

In conclusion, as long as the verbiage used in our daily work is still child care vs day care (see section 30), then we speak in favor of this bill.

I would be happy to discuss this bill or other early childhood related issues with you if you desire.

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