



United Community Services of Johnson County

Written-Only Testimony in Support of Senate Bill sponsored by Gov. Kelly/Sen. Sykes Julie Brewer, Executive Director of United Community Services of Johnson County

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Executive Director

Julie K. Brewer

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Julie K. Brewer, Executive Director
United Community Services of Johnson County, Inc.
9001 W. 110th St., Ste 100
Overland Park, KS 66210

Chairman Tyson and Members of the Committee on Assessment and Taxation:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the Senate Bill sponsored by Gov. Kelly/Sen. Sykes regarding a Sales Tax Holiday for Back to School Supplies. United Community Services of Johnson County (UCS) is a nonprofit agency that provides data analysis, leads collaborative planning, and mobilizes resources to enhance the availability and delivery of health and human services in Johnson County and the surrounding area.

UCS believes in the importance of supporting policies, programs and services that are invested in the success of our community's most vital resource - its people. Many working families across Kansas have become increasingly cost burdened in their housing, healthcare, childcare and other necessities like clothing and school supplies. For example, families with two children pay on average \$19,736 per year for childcare, or 17% of the median household income for Johnson County.

The most recent U.S. Census data show that more than 15% of school age children in Johnson County are low-income defined as 200% or less of the federal poverty level, or \$43,920 for a family of three. The purchase of critical items, like school supplies and education equipment consumes a higher portion of low-income households' income, resulting in lower-income households paying a larger portion of their income in taxes than higher income households.

UCS advocates for the advancement of fiscal and taxation policies that support families' ability to reach and maintain economic stability and further educational attainment and workforce growth.

Implementing a Sales Tax Holiday for Back to School Supplies would provide direct relief to hardworking families with children at all levels of education, saving Kansas families an estimated \$6.5 million per year. UCS supports the Senate Bill sponsored by Gov. Kelly/Sen. Sykes.

Source: U.S. Census ACS 2021 1-year data