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**Senate Ways and Means Committee
February 15, 2023**

Chairperson Billinger and members of the Ways & Means Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 195. My name is Tanya Dorf Brunner, and I am the Executive Director for Oral Health Kansas, Inc. We are the statewide advocacy organization dedicated to promoting the importance of lifelong dental health by shaping policy and educating the public, so Kansans know that all mouths matter.

Brush Book Bed

Oral Health Kansas is happy to stand in support of SB 195. Since 2017 we have been supporting the Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition in their work on the Brush Book Bed program. This is a program first developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and adapted here in Kansas for community-based settings like Parents as Teachers. Brush Book Bed is a way of teaching families how to make a healthy routine for their toddlers of brushing their teeth, reading a book, and going to bed at a regular time. It's had great success here in Topeka. One of the things the Shawnee County Oral Health Coalition has been able to do is refer families participating in Brush Book Bed to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Many of the families they work with do not have a lot of books at home for their kids, so the Dolly Parton Imagination Library has been life changing for them. Now they are able to get books for their toddlers every month!

Last year Oral Health Kansas began working with KDHE to expand Brush Book Bed across the state, but it's been much harder to incorporate referrals to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library because many communities do not participate in it. We know that children and families will be more successful if they are able to have access to the books available through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library.

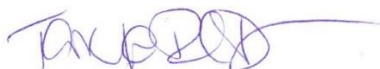
Braxxton's Story

One of my co-workers has a darling 15-month-old son named Braxxton. He's been interested in books for a few months, and my co-worker was excited to sign him up for the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. They have a Topeka address, but they live just over the county line in Jefferson County. The Meriden-Ozawkie Library does not participate in the program, so they have a big barrier in trying to get Braxxton signed up.

SB 195

Oral Health Kansas stands in support of SB 195 because it will allow more families across the state to not only participate in Brush Book Bed, but also the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Expanding this program will ensure more kids are exposed to books and reading at an early age and that they are ready to start school with a good habit of reading already established.

Sincerely,



Tanya Dorf Brunner
Executive Director
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