

Dear Senate Committee,

I apologize I am unable to present this in person. I made a previous commitment to substitute for the nurse at my local grade school.

I would like to take this opportunity to speak on behalf of Kansas children, our citizens without a voice.

As you consider SB 405, I would encourage you to remember children are not simply small adults. Children breath at a faster rate, their airways are smaller, their skin is thinner and they have a proportionately larger body surface area. Children are shorter than adults. The blood/brain barrier and their immune system is not yet fully developed.

What does this mean? To quote from the World Health Organization, "Due to their (children) dynamic developmental physiology children are often subjected to higher exposures to pollutants found in air, water, and food". As consideration is given to dramatically increasing the number of chickens on each farm, think about those exhaust fans blowing particulate matter from the chicken houses. Next think of reducing the setback from residential areas. When a foreign substance is inhaled, our body produces mucus to transport it out. As you can imagine, smaller airways are more prone to mucus plugging. Particulate matter is heavier than air and therefore drifts downward. This means our children are breathing air that is more concentrated with particulate matter. Increased truck traffic brings even more pollution to the local air.

Thinner skin, a larger proportion of body surface area, and an immune system that is not fully developed all combine to make a child more susceptible to chemical and pathogen exposure. Chicken manure contains over 150 pathogens, that fact is from our own CDC.

Considering the increase in autism spectrum disorders and childhood asthma, we need to be protective of our children's health and future.

I ask you to place the health and future of children first. Please oppose SB 405.

Thank you,

Cecilia Pruitt, RN, BSN
Tonganoxie Kansas

PS: Being from Tonganoxie, I want to also let you know that I too shared the concerns of many in Tonganoxie that these large chicken barns would damage our air and water quality, and therefore, diminish our quality of life and community well-being.