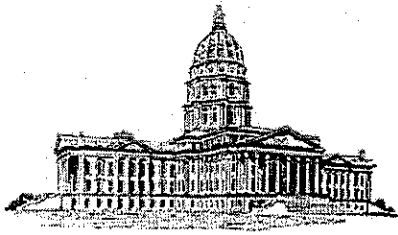


STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



SUSAN HUMPHRIES
99TH DISTRICT

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TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

**FROM: Susan Humphries, Kansas House of Representatives, Dist. 99
Member of the Kansas Judicial Council Committee on KARA
Practicing Adoption Attorney**

DATE: March 15, 2018

**Re: Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 2481 amending the Kansas
Adoption and Relinquishment Act (KARA).**

Dear Chairman Wilborn and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

HB 2481 amends the Kansas Adoption and Relinquishment Act, that has not been significantly amended since it was enacted in 1990.

In June of 2015 the Judicial Council formed a new advisory committee for the purpose of undertaking a comprehensive review of KARA. I was honored to be on that committee, which included a variety of adoption practitioners: judges, practicing attorneys, a DCF representative, and legislators. It was a distinguished group, with thousands of Kansas adoptions implemented and finalized by the group over the many years of their service.

The committee met monthly or more often, for almost two years. We painstakingly went over every section of the Kansas Adoption and Relinquishment Act, discussing and discussing each and every word and phrase, with the goal to

update it, to make it more clear for practitioners, and to leave the parts that were working well.

Clarification concerning jurisdiction and notice were two of the toughest sections to come to a consensus on. We did extensive research, consulted other experts in the field, and settled on conforming to the Uniform Child Custody Jurisdiction and Enforcement Act (UCCJEA) for jurisdiction, and retaining the notice provisions in KARA. Other updates include definition clarifications, and minor changes in the relinquishment process for birth fathers. My more experienced colleagues who are here from the Judicial Council Advisory Committee would be happy to answer any more technical questions.

It is particularly noteworthy that the House Judiciary Committee passed it out of committee with no amendments, and it passed the full Kansas House of Representatives unanimously 117-0.

I urge your support for HB 2481, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Humphries', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Susan Humphries