

TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SB 312

February 4, 2020

Chairman Gene Suellentrop and Members of the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee,

The Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (KAAP) represents over 90% of the practicing pediatricians in the state. The KAAP has the fundamental goal that all children and adolescents in Kansas have the opportunity to grow safe and strong. It is with this goal in mind that we want to share our support of SB 312 amending the Child Care Act. Science supports the benefits of quality early child care and education and, conversely, the lost opportunities and setbacks that result from poor-quality care.

Nearly 50% of children under the age of 5 years-old attend out of home care. Pediatricians and KAAP want to be involved in helping promote quality early education and quality child care. We encourage legislation that supports early child care and education (ECE) providers to increase quality of care, promote early education, and improve the health and well-being of Kansas children.

The AAP policy statement, [Quality Early Education and Child Care From Birth to Kindergarten](#), provides some recommendations as it relates to pediatricians, community actions, and state and national actions to ensure the health and safety of children in out of home child care. Specific issues that should be addressed in any child care setting include an awareness and following of evidence-based guidelines regarding:

- Safe sleep in the prevention of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)
- Importance of immunization and infection control in the prevention of illness and managing infectious diseases in a group care setting
- Safe medication administration in compliance with laws, regulations, and best practices to maintain the health of the child, prevent illness, or relieve symptoms
- Pediatric safety and injury prevention
- Healthy diet and physical activity

[Caring for Our Children](#) (CFOC) is a collection of national standards that represent the best practices, based on evidence, expertise, and experience for quality health and safety policies and practices for today's early care and education settings. The goal of these recommendations and SB 312 are to protect children as vulnerable and dependent citizens and to protect families as consumers of child care service. [Section 10.2.0.1 Regulation of All Out-of-Home Child Care](#), from CFOC states: "Every state should have a statute that identifies the licensing agency and mandates the licensing and regulation of all full-time and part-time out-of-home care of children, regardless of setting, except care provided by parents or legal guardians, grandparents, siblings,



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aunts, or uncles (sometimes called relative, friend, and neighbor care) or when a family engages an individual in the family's home to care solely for their children.”

Approximately 44% of Kansas's population live in what is called a child care desert, which is any census tract with more than 50 children under age 5 that contains either no child care providers or so few options that there are more than three times as many children as licensed child care slots. SB 312 is important because it gives an incentive to unlicensed child care providers to become licensed, and sets expectations to provide quality care for young children. The goal should be focused on engaging with the ECE providers to educate them on the health and safety standards they should be employing to ensure the children they care for are healthy and safe and the benefits that licensure offers. We recommend a mechanism to provide outreach education to unlicensed providers to prepare them for the increased penalties when this bill becomes law in addition to the targets and timeframes for compliance and transition to licensed status. The AAP Healthy Futures curriculum (free) provided on the Healthy Child Care Web site (www.healthychildcare.org) could be utilized for this education.

Thank you for your time and attention. We welcome any questions you might have and are happy to serve as your resource on all pediatric issues. Please let us know if we can provide further information, education, or resources.

Respectfully submitted,

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Legislative Coordinator
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References:

- Caring for Our Children <http://nrckids.org/CFOC>
- Bright Futures <https://brightfutures.aap.org/Pages/default.aspx>
- Healthy Child Care Web site (www.healthychildcare.org).
- Donoghue EA and AAP Council on Early Childhood. [Quality Early Education and Child Care From Birth to Kindergarten](#). *Pediatrics*. 2017;140(2):e20171488