



The Family Resource Center

Date of Hearing: January 31, 2022

Ann Elliott, Executive Director

Family Resource Center, Inc.

House Committee on Children and Seniors

Chairperson Concannon and Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of The Family Resource Center (The Center), Pittsburg Kansas in support of HB 2525.

The Center has provided child care and preschool services for over twenty-five years. As an early childhood education center serving over 400 children annually, we see every day the positive impact quality child care can have on strengthening families when parents know their child is in a safe, caring environment.

Sixteen percent of the population in our region are classified as living in poverty. A single parent with one infant can pay up over 40% of their income for child care. This leaves little left for food and bills. Barriers created by participation in the Child Support program to food and child care assistance can make it impossible to lift children out of poverty.

Eliminating the lifetime limits to child care assistance allows The Center to fully support individuals attending Pittsburg State University and SEK Career and Technical Center. This means fewer Kansas kids will grow up in poverty because parents or the single mom will have the skills required to pursue jobs that pay a living wage. Accessible, high-quality child care is a factor to the economic health of our community.

We serve single moms who have been in abusive relationships and requiring participation in the Child Support Program for child care assistance puts both mother and children in danger. Kansas is one of the few states that requires people to cooperate with child support to get both food and child care assistance. This severely limits supports for families and children who are in a critical time of need.

In these times of limited workforce, State systems need to look for ways to remove barriers to food and child care access and give all Southeast Kansans a greater chance to become financially secure.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 2525

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Elliott", with a long, sweeping horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ann Elliott
Executive Director
Family Resource Center, Inc.
ann@frcpittsburg.org