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Written Only Testimony HB 2525
House Children and Seniors Committee

I write this written testimony in hope that you will pass HB 2525 out of committee and encourage leadership to bring the bill above the line. I considered whether to provide testimony as a former legislator who served on this committee or as member of the Early Childhood Caucus or as an advocate for children and families in Pittsburg since 1995 or as a direct service provider in my current employment. Then I decided to speak Kansan to Kansan because this bill addresses are a very basic human need—food and caring for those most vulnerable.

This bill helps little kids and their families. This bill doesn't hurt anyone. This bill recognizes we've done some things in the past that technically make it harder for folks to ask for help, but realistically make it impossible. This bill cuts out a system of judgement that I hope no one ever places on me or you.

I would be happy to visit with any of you regarding the real-life impact of this bill. I've lived it as I have helped/encouraged folks who need food and child care. I know when the fear hits their eyes in the application process. I know what it looks like when they back off and say, "no thanks". I also know what it looks like when non-profit child care centers and local food pantries pick up the difference. It's a heavy load. One that could be shared the state with little to no effort and, again, at harm to no one.