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Children's Alliance of KANSAS

Proponent Testimony – HB 2557
House Committee on Child Welfare and Foster Care
February 3, 2026

Chair Howerton, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Ousley and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony regarding HB 2557. My name is Kristalle Hedrick, and I serve as CEO of the Children's Alliance of Kansas, the statewide association representing private nonprofit providers delivering child welfare services across the state.

Kansas already participates in the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (ICPC), which governs how children are safely placed across state lines for foster care, kinship care, and adoptive placements.

HB 2557 updates Kansas statute to align with current national ICPC standards, rules, and operational requirements that have evolved over time to improve efficiency, accountability, and child safety.

Updating statute ensures Kansas remains aligned with national practice and able to fully participate in interstate placements without unnecessary legal or procedural barriers.

Interstate placements are a regular and necessary part of child welfare practice. Children often have relatives, foster families, or adoptive resources located in other states. When these connections are safe and appropriate, interstate placement can help children maintain family relationships and achieve permanency.

Modernizing Kansas statute to match current ICPC standards helps ensure:

- **Safe and consistent placement review across states.**
Receiving states must evaluate placements before a child moves, helping ensure children are placed in safe and appropriate homes.

- **Clear responsibility for oversight and services.**
Updated standards maintain clarity regarding which state retains responsibility for the child and ensures continued supervision after placement.

- **Improved coordination and timeliness.**
Modern ICPC processes emphasize better communication and more predictable timelines, reducing delays that can prolong instability for children and families.

- **Continued access to out-of-state family resources.**
Keeping statute current helps prevent administrative barriers that could delay or prevent placement with safe relatives or permanency resources located outside Kansas.

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For children experiencing foster care, timely and stable placements are critical. Delays or inconsistencies in interstate placement processes can prolong time in temporary care and disrupt permanency efforts. By aligning Kansas statute with updated ICPC standards, HB 2557 supports smoother interstate coordination while maintaining the safeguards necessary to protect children.

HB 2557 represents a practical and necessary statutory update to keep Kansas aligned with modern interstate child welfare practice. This bill helps ensure Kansas children can safely access appropriate placements across state lines while maintaining accountability and oversight. For these reasons, the Children's Alliance of Kansas respectfully encourages the Committee to support HB 2557. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kristalle Hedrick