Landon State Office Building
900 SW Jackson Street, Suite 1041
Topeka, KS 66612

Kansas
Office of the Child Advocate

Phone: (785) 296-8642
Fax: 785-296-5007
Toll Free: 1-844-KS-CHILD
Website: childadvocate.ks.gov

Kerrie Lonard, Child Advocate

Laura Kelly, Governor

Written Proponent Testimony to House Committee on Child Welfare and Foster Care
House Bill 2557: Enacting and joining with other states in the interstate compact for the placement of children and authorizing the administration and implementation of the compact
February 3, 2026

Chair Howerton, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Minority Member Ousley, and Members of the Committee, I am writing as the Child Advocate with the Office of the Child Advocate as a proponent of House Bill 2557 enacting and joining with other states in the interstate compact for the placement of children (ICPC) and authorizing the administration and implementation of the compact.

The purpose of the Office of the Child Advocate (OCA) is to act as a neutral, independent agency to ensure that children and families receive adequate coordination of child welfare services for child protection and care through services offered by the Department for Children and Families or the department's contracting entities, the Department for Aging and Disability Services, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Health and Environment and juvenile courts. OCA receives and responds to complaints regarding state agencies, service providers, and juvenile courts that adversely affect the health, safety, and well-being of children. Through case and systemic recommendations, OCA seeks to drive impact on best practices, policies, and law.

OCA has received concerns regarding the ICPC process and impact on placement and permanency, including excessive delays and inconsistent application. For example, ICPC Regulation 3 identifies placements with parents as one of four placement categories where ICPC may apply[1]; however, in 2016, the Kansas Court of Appeals found that courts may directly place children with parents in another state if ICPC hasn't been initiated, and the court terminates jurisdiction upon placement.[2] OCA has found that the use of ICPC when placing with a parent who resides out of state is interpreted and applied inconsistently across the state and various judicial districts.

OCA formally recommended in a case specific report and subsequently in the 2024 Annual Report and again in 2025 that Kansas move forward with enacting the revised ICPC.

The Association of Administrators of the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children (AAICPC) revised the Articles and Regulations of the compact; however, it will not take effect

[1] https://aphsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/ICPC-Regulations_TOC.pdf
[2] I*n re S.R.C.-Q,* 2016 WL 683242 (Kan. Ct. App.)

until it has been passed by 35 states. As of July 2025, all four states that border Kansas have enacted the revised ICPC, as well as 16 other states.[3]

By moving forward at this time, Kansas can join its bordering states amongst many others as part of the initial member state team, having real impact in developing the majority rules, to include ensuring consistency in shared language, terms and definitions, and improved timelines.

I am pleased to respond to questions at the appropriate time.

Kerrie Lonard, JD, MSW
Child Advocate
kerrie.lonard@ks.gov
(785) 296-5470

[3] https://aphsa.org/revised-icpc/