Opposition Testimony for HB 2480
Committee on Judiciary
February 4, 2026

Chair Humphries, Vice Chair Williams, Ranking Member Osman, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide opponent testimony today regarding HB 2480.

I am Gina Meier-Hummel. I am in my 33rd year of serving at-risk Kansas families. I hold a master's degree in both Clinical and Administrative Social Work from the University of Kansas. I have spent my career working both in public child welfare and in nonprofit management. I am the former Secretary for the Kansas Department of Children and Families (DCF), a former Commissioner for Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services (KDADS), and a former Deputy Director for Victim Services for the Kansas Attorney General's office, and now I am in my seventh year of servicing as the Executive Director of O'Connell Children's Shelter. I am also an Adjunct Professor of Social Work at Washburn University.

HB 2489 would specify that a licensed social worker is not required to report suspected abuse or neglect of a child under certain conditions when a licensed social worker is working under the supervision of an attorney. The bill would allow an attorney to require a licensed social worker with reporting obligations to maintain confidentiality of information under certain conditions in compliance with the attorney's ethical obligation when the licensed social worker is working under the supervision of such attorney.

Social workers not only have a legal obligation, but an ethical obligation to report suspected abuse and neglect. This obligation is rooted in the need to protect vulnerable individuals and is reinforced not only by state statutes, but also professional licensing requirements. Social workers are mandated reporters due to their frequent contact with vulnerable populations, and their professional licensing and ethical codes reinforce this duty. To legally exempt licensed social workers working under licensed attorneys from this obligation creates an inherent conflict with their ethical and professional duties to report suspected abuse.

I am happy to speak with any of you at any time regarding this and thank you for your work on behalf of Kansans.

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