

Chair Erickson and Members of the Committee,

We appreciate this opportunity to submit written proponent testimony for SB 282, which eliminates certain license fees and training requirements, permits 16-year old staff to staff children without supervision, and creates a process for licensees to apply for statutory waivers. We hold the following position on SB 282:

1. SB 282 relaxes occupational barriers which puts downward pressure on childcare costs
2. SB 282 is a directionally positive bill to help address the shortage of childcare through smart removal of cost-increasing red tape.

### **SB 282 relaxes occupational barriers which puts downward pressure on childcare costs**

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, daycare and preschool prices are up 190% higher than their costs 20 years ago.<sup>1</sup> Prices rising so rapidly over time strongly suggests the supply of childcare providers isn't keeping up with the demand for childcare. A partial explanation of this could result from population gains. We believe the most significant explanation is Kansas regulatory environment depresses the growth of childcare providers. SB 282 relieves some of that pressure. SB 282 eliminating license fees and training requirements will make it easier for new childcare facilities to start up and be properly staffed. Allowing teen staff to look after toddlers and older children gives more flexibility of childcare licensees to organize staff and processes. Statutory waivers also give increased flexibility to childcare licensees so they can better meet the needs of the community.

### **SB 282 is a directionally positive bill to help address the shortage of childcare through smart removal of cost-increasing red tape.**

Researchers have determined that part of a pragmatic roadmap for reducing the budget costs for government agencies as well as businesses can be achieved through removing red tape.

Jurisdictions that have adopted red-tape-reduction programs in the U.S. have not experienced diminished protection for public health and safety or other adverse effects that critics warn of. Instead, many have experienced resounding economic success. It is important to note the distinction between regulations that support a legitimate government function and red tape, which are rules that do not serve the public interest because their cost outweighs their benefits. This bill begins to address those very things to the benefit of parents and caregivers across the state.

There is still considerable work to be done to relax the burden on childcare facilities so they can grow and keep costs down. While SB 282 leaves work on the table, it is a step in the right direction.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to support SB 282 in its current form.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Consumer Price Index: U.S. City Average for Daycare and PreSchool Costs,