

AlignedEric@wearealigned.org

HB 2294

House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

Proponent

February 26, 2025

Chairman Tarwater and Members of the House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **HB 2294**, a critical piece of legislation that strengthens Kansas's childcare system by reducing regulatory barriers, expanding availability, and ensuring that families have access to high-quality care.

Aligned is committed to advancing policies that expand access to childcare, recognizing that it is a key economic driver for Kansas. When working parents struggle to find affordable, quality childcare, businesses experience workforce shortages, and children miss out on valuable early learning experiences. **HB 2294** takes meaningful steps toward removing obstacles to childcare access while maintaining strong safety and quality standards.

Why HB 2294 is Essential for Kansas

This bill supports working families and the economy. Childcare is essential to activating the labor force. Without reliable, affordable options, parents — especially mothers — are forced to reduce hours or leave the workforce entirely. This bill can help more providers operate in the state, helping meet the growing demand for childcare across the state.

It expands access by reducing unnecessary barriers. Streamlining licensing requirements and allowing temporary waivers grants providers flexibility while maintaining health and safety standards. It also ensures that home-based providers do not have to reside in their facility, removing an unnecessary restriction that limits childcare availability.

This bill creates the Kansas Office of Early Childhood to improve coordination and oversight. Transferring childcare licensing, subsidy administration, and parent education programs to a dedicated state office streamlines services and reduces bureaucratic inefficiencies. A centralized approach ensures policies are aligned, resources are effectively allocated, and providers receive the support they need to expand capacity. By establishing a clear point of leadership, Kansas can better address the growing demand for high-quality childcare and early learning opportunities.

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It provides clear pathways for workforce growth in early childhood. The bill clarifies training and qualification requirements for childcare professionals, ensuring that individuals with relevant experience or alternative credentials can enter and remain in the field. Addressing the workforce shortage is key to expanding access.

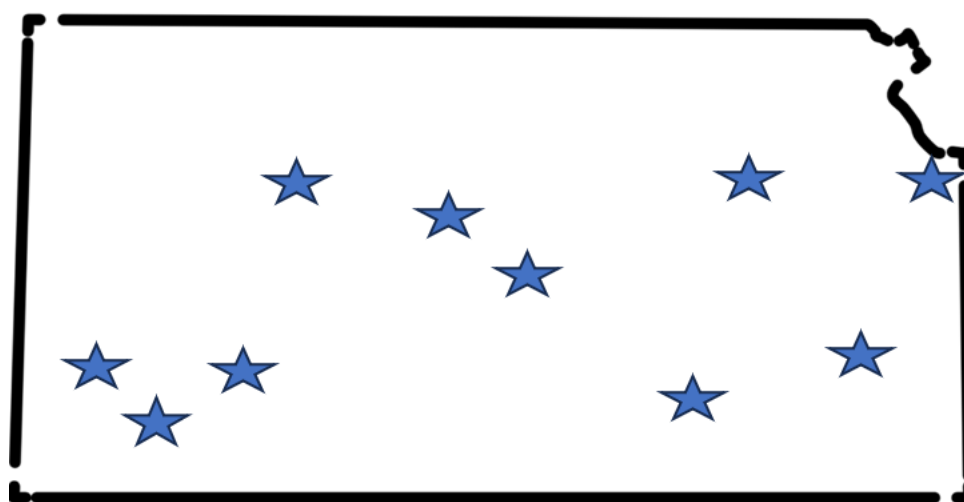
Childcare is not just a family issue — it is an economic and workforce issue. Kansas businesses depend on a strong, reliable workforce, and families need childcare options that are accessible, safe, and affordable. **HB 2294** offers a practical, solutions-driven approach by cutting red tape, increasing childcare availability, and establishing a strong governance system to support long-term sustainability.

We urge the committee to support **HB 2294** and take this necessary step toward strengthening Kansas's childcare system. Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome any questions and the opportunity to provide further information.

Thank you,

Eric Syverson

Director of Policy and Research – KS, Aligned



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