

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL
300 S.W. TENTH AVENUE
TOPEKA, KS 66612
(785) 296-7696
laura.williams@house.ks.gov



LAURA WILLIAMS
30TH DISTRICT

DISTRICT ADDRESS
P.O. BOX 14871
LENEXA, KS 66285

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Chairman Tarwater and members of the committee:

While the need for accessible and high-quality childcare is a universal issue, it's important to recognize that the challenges faced by communities may differ. This is especially true in a diverse state like Kansas, where Lenexa may have different needs than Great Bend. That's why House Bill 2294 was developed to address these unique challenges and provide targeted solutions. Through collaboration and compromise between members on both sides of the aisle and stakeholders within the childcare industry, we have crafted a bill that recognizes and addresses the needs of our communities across our state.

The issue isn't just about daycare licenses or training requirements—it's about addressing the systemic challenges that make it harder for childcare providers to operate and for families to access quality care. Currently, multiple agencies are tasked with overseeing separate needs of the childcare industry in Kansas, leading to confusion, delays, and inefficiency. Included in this bill are the elimination of arduous regulations burdening childcare owners. My hope with streamlining childcare oversight will come with more reduction of burdensome regulations on childcare owners.

The long-term strength of our state hinges on our ability to meet the demands of our workforce. While employers are eager to foster thriving communities, a lack of accessible childcare holds families, companies, and economies back. This piece of legislation ensures that Kansas is no longer playing catch-up but instead leading the way on childcare reform. By clearing the path for providers to open and sustain facilities, increasing capacity, and reducing complexity for business owners, we are addressing challenges in real-time while preparing for future growth. This bill doesn't grow government; it eliminates unnecessary redundancies. By unifying childcare oversight under one office, we empower parents, providers, and businesses with a system that's easier to understand and use.

Laura Williams

Representative Laura Williams