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HB 2203 Adding FASD to the Conditions that May Establish Eligibility for Special Education
Proponent – Written Testimony for Hearing On January 15, 2026

Honorable Members of the House Committee on Education:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information on HB 2203. I am a Kansas constituent that has been directly impacted by Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) in many different ways. I was a Foster Parent for over 10 years with over 100 children coming through my home, many effected and undiagnosed. I am an Adoptive Parent with three affected children. I am a Child Advocate and SPED Teacher for PreK-6th Grade serving many undiagnosed affected children in the classroom daily. I am also married to my husband who is an FASD adult who has struggled his entire life with the effects of FASD undiagnosed and untreated. The CDC indicates that FASD impacts up to 1 in 20 students, however with my lived experiences with FASD, I feel that the numbers are much greater!

My three adopted children were denied services due to the lack of knowledge, lack of proper diagnostics, and lack of services for FASD. Many wrongly believe that FASD is only present by facial recognition, however, facial features are only present in a small percentage of those with an FASD. My adopted children and a very high number of children I have fostered over the years, had a normal IQ, denying them SPED services, however due to the extreme differences in the chronological and social/emotional ages, and executive function deficits, they were incapable of performing and interacting with their peers academically and socially. Due to these failures, lack of knowledge in the education, legal and medical systems, lack of services, lack of understanding, and safety concerns, my three children all had to be placed back in our broken foster care system to bounce around from foster homes to residential treatment facilities to mental hospital to group homes, numerous times, ending in me being forced to relinquish my parental rights back to the broken systems that I adopted them from over a decade ago, rendering my children wards of the state with no mother again.

HB 2203 would help families like mine because it would establish eligibility for SPED and other necessary services. Services I believe could have been vital in keeping them from falling so far behind in the classroom, assisted in peer issues, issues of misperceived

defiance/insubordination within the school and other systems. All of which rolled over into our home lives and ultimately ended in three children losing their mother.

Please give serious consideration to the big picture of how lack of services and diagnosis impacts children, their families, and all they have contact with in their lives.

Holly J. Helus