



February 5, 2026
Cole Schnieders, Continuum of Care Planning Manager
Coalition to End Homelessness in Wichita/Sedgwick County
245 N. Water
Wichita, KS 67202

Written Neutral Testimony to House Bill 2504

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding HB 2504.

The Coalition to End Homelessness in Wichita/Sedgwick County brings together faith communities, nonprofits, local and state government, businesses, and community stakeholders to achieve a single goal: ending homelessness in Sedgwick County. We pursue this mission through housing, supportive services, and community-wide partnerships, including collaborations with private landlords. By definition, ending homelessness requires securing housing for individuals experiencing homelessness, and any changes to the housing market—especially those enacted through legislation—can significantly impact our ability to do this work.

In 2025, the Coalition partnered with private landlords to provide housing for 1,144 residents of Sedgwick County. This effort required negotiating with landlords to accept partial payments on behalf of households receiving federal and local housing assistance and supporting tenants who may have prior evictions or criminal histories. It also depended on the dedication of case managers and housing staff to ensure successful placements. Legislation that restricts these practices would substantially reduce our capacity to prevent and end homelessness.

That same year, 2,077 Kansans became homeless for the first time. Many were part of the “ALICE” population—Asset Limited, Income Constrained, but Employed—working Kansans living paycheck to paycheck, for whom a flat tire or unexpected illness can trigger a cascade into homelessness. Statewide, 38% of households are ALICE. In Sedgwick County, 52% of ALICE families are rent-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing. This represents 27,175 families at immediate risk of homelessness and entering an already overstretched system.

Under HB 2504, unless the State enacts statewide renter protections, these vulnerable households may face increased barriers to housing. Without landlords willing to accept partial payments through housing assistance, thousands of at-risk residents may be unable to maintain stable housing. They would lose access to the safety nets of their community—churches, neighbors, families—during critical times of need.

Currently, the Coalition works closely with local governments to align housing policies, tenant protections, and landlord practices. This flexibility allows us to implement community-specific strategies that prevent homelessness and support housing retention for formerly homeless households and other highly vulnerable renters, including seniors and single-parent families. Legislation like HB 2504 could limit local flexibility and, in turn, reduce the effectiveness of these tailored interventions.

We offer this information to assist policymakers in understanding how HB 2504 may affect our capacity to end homelessness, ensure community-wide housing stability, and respond to local housing needs. While HB 2504 does not explicitly prevent our work with the private sector, it also does not strengthen or support it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.