

**Testimony on HB 2320 – Ensuring Educational Stability for Foster Youth**  
**House K-12 Education Budget Committee**  
**February 13, 2025**

Chairman Goetz, Vice Chair Hill, Ranking Minority Member Winn, and members of the committee. My name is Matt Stephens, and I serve as the Vice President of Advocacy for Saint Francis Ministries (SFM). SFM is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting Kansas children and families since 1945. I appreciate the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 2320.

HB 2320 seeks to address a persistent challenge faced by youth in foster care: maintaining educational stability despite changes in placement. Frequent school moves can disrupt academic progress, sever important peer and teacher relationships, and negatively impact overall well-being. Research shows that each school transfer can set foster youth back by several months academically. This bill helps mitigate these disruptions by ensuring that children in the custody of the Secretary for Children and Families can either continue attending their school of origin or enroll in a district that best meets their needs, regardless of their placement location.

**Why HB 2320 Matters:**

- **Reduces Academic Disruptions:** By allowing foster youth to remain in a familiar school environment, this bill helps prevent setbacks in their education.
- **Supports Federal Best Practices:** Aligns with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which emphasizes school stability for children in foster care.
- **Enhances Placement Success:** Ensuring a consistent school experience can improve placement stability and provide much-needed continuity for both youth and foster families.
- **Streamlines Record Transfers:** Establishing clear timelines for the transfer of student records minimizes enrollment delays and administrative challenges.

Providing educational consistency is essential to improving long-term outcomes for foster youth. HB 2320 is a meaningful step toward ensuring these children receive the stability and opportunities they deserve. I encourage the committee to support this important legislation.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

**Matt Stephens**

Vice President of Advocacy  
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