

March 3, 2025

Proponent Testimony: Senate Bill 179

Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation

Written Only: Cheri Faunce, CEO

Organization: YWCA Northeast Kansas

Dear Chairperson Tyson, Vice Chairperson Peck, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cheri Faunce, and I am the CEO at YWCA Northeast Kansas, which has been serving the Topeka region for almost 140 years. I appreciate this opportunity to share about our work, and why we value state investments that support families with young children. We urge you to vote in support of Senate Bill 179, providing a much-needed tax credit to families caring for the youngest Kansans.

We have a long history as a nonprofit childcare provider in Shawnee County. In the last year of operations, 2024, more than 56 percent of children enrolled in our childcare center were utilizing subsidies through the Department for Children and Families. According to the 2022 report The Status of Women in Kansas (1), full-time infant care can exceed the cost of public college tuition. For a caregiver who qualifies for the full child tax credit outlined in SB 179, the \$600 credit could be a lifeline to cover a period of childcare costs, help pay down an emergency room bill, or supplement the ever-increasing cost of groceries and diapers.

YWCA Northeast Kansas also provides crucial services to victim/survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking in five Kansas counties. Financial stability is one of the toughest hurdles facing survivors as they work to exist an abusive relationship, especially if the survivor was not previously employed due to the abuse. A state child tax credit accessible to survivors with young children would be a lifeline for building their future as a family.

We see, firsthand, the challenges many families of young children face in our community. Please vote to advance SB 179, an investment in the future of Kansas. If you have any questions about our programs and services, I can be reached at cheri@ywcaneks.org and (785) 233-1750 ext. 220.

Thank you,

Cheri Faunce
CEO
YWCA Northeast Kansas

1 Center for Science, Technology & Economic Policy (CSTEP), Institute for Policy & Social Research, The University of Kansas (2021). The Status of Women in Kansas: A Summary Report to United WE. Retrieved from <https://ipsr.ku.edu/publicat/StatusofWomeninKansas2021.pdf>.