



March 6, 2026

Heather Schrotberger, Executive Director
Kansas Head Start Association
Written Only Proponent Testimony for SB 513
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Chair Billinger and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide proponent testimony in support of SB 513, which aims to strengthen the Kansas Child Care Assistance program through a modernized and streamlined system. I am the Executive Director of the Kansas Head Start Association (KHSa). KHSa strengthens leadership, learning, partnership, and advocacy opportunities for Head Start families, staff, and programs. Twenty-five Head Start programs provide early education services to more than 6,200 young children across Kansas communities.

Head Start services in Kansas include Early Head Start home visiting for infants and toddlers, Early Head Start center-based services (child care), and Head Start preschool-aged services. KHSa champions policies that will positively impact Head Start programs, the Head Start workforce, and Head Start families and children. Families in Kansas, including Head Start families, need accessible child care options in their local communities. Child care providers, including Early Head Start child care partners, need payment stability to sustain their businesses. This bill addresses these needs by directing the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) and the Kansas Office of Early Childhood (KOEC) to move toward direct-to-provider payments through a thoughtful, phased in approach.

Reliable child care is essential for Kansas' workforce and economy. Addressing avoidable challenges in the Child Care Assistance Program, for both families and providers, can strengthen the child care workforce and improve access to care for families so they can support their families, contribute to the local workforce, and provide for their family's future. Coordinated leadership between DCF and KOEC, along with sustainable, responsive implementation, will modernize child care assistance payment processes, creating a streamlined system that works for the families and child care providers who rely on the program.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this with you today. If I can be of further assistance, please contact me at hschrotberger@ksheadstart.org

Sincerely,

Heather Schrotberger
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