

SESSION OF 2026

## SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2352

As Amended by House Committee of the Whole

### **Brief\***

HB 2352, amended, would require duly ordained ministers to report child abuse or neglect unless reporting would violate the penitential communication privilege.

The bill would amend law governing mandated reporting in the Kansas Revised Code for the Care of Children (CINC) to require a duly ordained minister of religion, as defined in continuing law, to report suspected child abuse or neglect. However, such reporting would not be required if reporting would violate the penitential communication privilege as provided in continuing law.

The bill would also require all mandated reporters as enumerated in the CINC Code to participate in training about mandated reporting prior to July 1, 2027. Any individual who becomes a mandated reporter after July 1, 2027, would be required to receive training within six months of becoming a mandated reporter. Training would be provided by the Department for Children and Families (Department or DCF) or a partner approved by the Department.

### **Background**

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Judiciary at the request of Representatives Lewis and Schlingensiepen.

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\*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <https://klrd.gov/>

### ***House Committee on Judiciary***

In the House committee hearing, **proponent** testimony was provided by representatives of the City of Topeka and Temple Baptist Church and by three private citizens. The proponents generally stated the bill would help better protect Kansas children from abuse.

Written-only proponent testimony was provided by a representative of the Kansas Catholic Conference.

Written-only **neutral** testimony was provided by a representative of the Kansas District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

No other testimony was provided.

### ***House Committee of the Whole***

The House Committee of the Whole made a technical amendment to update dates found in statutory references and dates for required training of mandated reporters, the latter to continue to have a year between the bill's effective date and the date for the requirement to receive training.

### **Fiscal Information**

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, as introduced, DCF estimates that expenditures would increase by approximately \$89,000 in salary and benefits for an additional Protection Specialist position for the increase in reporting volume beginning in FY 2026.

The Office of Judicial Administration indicates that enactment of the bill could increase the number of cases filed in district courts because the bill would expand the list of mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse or neglect.

This, in turn, would increase the time spent by district court judicial and nonjudicial personnel in processing, researching, and hearing cases. In addition, the bill would require training for all mandatory reporters, which includes all Court Services Officers in the Judicial Branch. However, the fiscal effect on expenditures by the Judicial Branch cannot be estimated. The bill would not have a fiscal effect on revenues to the Judicial Branch. However, the bill could result in the collection of docket fees in possible additional cases filed under the provisions of the bill, which would be deposited in the State General Fund. Any fiscal effect associated with enactment of the bill is not reflected in *The FY 2027 Governor's Budget Report*.

Child abuse; clergy; mandated reporting