



House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development
Written Testimony in Support of HB 2785
March 6, 2024

Dear Chairman Tarwater and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Chamber of Lawrence, please accept this written testimony in support of HB 2785, which would establish the Kansas Office of Early Childhood within the Executive Branch, to be administered under the direction and supervision of the Executive Director of Early Childhood. The Office would facilitate and coordinate interagency cooperation towards the goal of serving children and families.

In today's economy, employers and working families depend on a quality early childhood system that efficiently serves the needs of those families. HB2785 would streamline a current system that constrains not only families, but state and local leaders from solving the issues of finding services needed. It ensures that there is one focused area of leadership and accountability for early childhood programs and not multiple jurisdictions and management.

Unifying various programs under one umbrella entity and governance would assist in helping families to navigate the system; would streamline overlapping requirements on providers; and provide for consistency in policies that are important to the quality and accessibility of early childhood care in Kansas.

Thank you for your service to the State and for your thoughtful consideration of this legislation. We urge you to support HB2785 and the positive impacts this tool can provide for the families in Kansas.

Respectfully,

Bonnie Lowe, IOM
President/CEO