



Area Chamber of Commerce

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Written Statement in Support of Senate Bill 164

March 1, 2023

Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation

Submitted by Renee Duxler, Interim CEO/President

The Salina Area Chamber of Commerce and our community partners support the passage of Senate Bill 164, which would provide a \$2,000 tax credit for qualifying employees of licensed childcare facilities.

The Salina community has seen a tremendous level of growth in jobs and workforce needs. As we continue to fill jobs, and look to recruit and retain talent, access to childcare is a crucial piece of our workforce development.

Salina is not unlike other Kansas communities right now in that we're struggling to fill childcare positions. Our childcare shortage is not related to a lack of space—we have rooms in all of our centers that are sitting empty right now because they don't have the childcare workers to open them up.

Better incentivizing a career in childcare continues to be a topic of discussion as we address this issue as a community. In these discussions it is also agreed that the community does not want to put the burden of these incentives back on working families.

When we sat down with our community partners to draft our Legislative Agenda for 2023, access to affordable childcare came forth as one of our top priorities and is outlined in that agenda. Our community partners include the City of Salina, Saline County, the Salina Airport Authority, the Salina Community Economic Development Organization, USD 305 Salina Public Schools, Salina Area Technical College, Kansas Wesleyan University, Kansas State University-Salina, Salina Regional Healthcare Center, and the Kansas University School of Medicine-Salina.

We believe that Senate Bill 164 addresses the need to recruit and retain childcare workforce, and therefore would provide better access and affordability to families.