

DCF LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



January 23, 2023

TESTIMONY OF

Tanya Keys, Deputy Secretary

Kansas Department for Children and Families

TESTIMONY ON

Proponent Written Only Testimony HB 2024

Chair

Senator Gossage

Vice Chair

Senator Erickson

Ranking Minority

Senator Pettey

and

Members of the Committee

SUMMARY OF ISSUE & DCF POSITION

Chair Gossage and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify as a proponent on HB 2024. HB 2024 concerns children and minors and relates to the Kansas newborn infant protection act. The bill proposes allowing the surrender of physical custody of an infant to an infant refuge bassinet as further described in the bill. HB 2024 would amend K.S.A. 38-2282.

CONTEXT & HISTORY

Infant refuge bassinets are a safety device for a parent to safely, securely, and anonymously surrender if they are unable to care for their newborn. Current Kansas law supports ability of a parent or other person having lawful custody of an infant who is 60 days or younger to surrender physical custody of the infant to employee who is on duty at a police station, sheriff's office, law enforcement center, fire station, city or county health department or medical care facility. This bill expands the means of surrendering physical custody to a specific safety device with certain required attributes which is the infant refuge bassinet, and that bassinet requires installation at locations that choose to implement such a safety device.

EFFECT OF LEGISLATION & FISCAL IMPACT

The legislation creates more options surrender physical custody of an infant. There is no fiscal impact to DCF; however, its assumed that local jurisdictions would have costs to install the bassinet features in their buildings or facilities.

DCF POSITION

DCF is supportive of this legislation and would ask this committee to pass HB 2024 favorably.