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March 24, 2021  
Paula Neth, President & CEO  
The Family Conservancy  
Proponent for House Bill 2414  
House Committee on Taxation

Chairman Smith and Members of the House Committee on Taxation:

I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2414 on behalf of The Family Conservancy (TFC). My name is Paula Neth, President and CEO of TFC.

TFC believes every child can reach their full potential when we invest in them and those who care for them. The first five years of a child's life mark the most important period of human development – determining emotional resilience, health outcomes, school readiness, and future career success. **We envision Kansas to be a place where every child can experience well-being throughout their lives.**

At a time when both the supply and demand sides of the child care sector are facing significant challenges, HB 2414 will enable employers to tap into the underutilized tax benefits to support their employees. This is a win for all Kansans – employers, employees and children.

Child care is a key component to a healthy workforce. Parents need reliable, quality care to enter and remain in the workforce. Children thrive when given reliable, high-quality care. Parents are able to advance their careers and create better lives when they know their children are receiving the care and education they need; and employers save money when they aren't facing constant vacancies and a revolving workforce due to parents struggling with child care cost and availability. Furthermore, the child care industry – as employers themselves – would also be fortified by a boost in steady enrollment if care is cost-shared by parents' employers.

Long before the pandemic created new challenges, the child care sector was fragile, underfunded and offered limited access. These issues have now been exacerbated, causing a crisis that is creating long-term damage to the vital child care industry. In the past year, more than three million women have left the workforce – a primary driver being the need to care for children as child care closed and schools provided remote education in response to COVID-19.

We ask that you support HB 2414 and other efforts which support child care for Kansas families and business owners. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I would be glad to engage in dialog around this topic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paula Neth".

Paula Neth  
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*Helping Children. Strengthening Families.*

