TOPEKA DOULA PROJECT

January 30, 2023
Abriona Markham, Executive Director
Topeka Doula Project

Verbal Testimony in support of SB 377
2023 Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation
Chairperson Tyson, Vice-chairperson Peck, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for the 2023 Senate Committee on Assessment and Taxation. My name is Abriona Markham, and I'm the Executive Director of the Topeka Doula Project. TDP is a nonprofit organization working to support Topeka families through pregnancy, continuous labor support, and after birth.

In this roles, I spend a considerable amount of my time talking with pregnant women, and parents in Topeka. Every conversation reveals the same conclusion: Parents are worried about how they are going to afford diapers, when they already have a hard time buying food. This dynamic has existed for a long time, and there are no easy answers. This has been so disruptive that 1 in 4 parents experiencing diaper need have missed work or school because they don't have enough diapers to send with their child to childcare (The National Diaper Bank Network). Topeka Doula Project gives away free diapers and in 6 hours, served over 200 families. Diaper need is finally getting the attention it deserves by the Legislature.

You have before you a solution, where SB 377 eliminates the sales tax on diapers, groceries, and feminine hygiene products. This would save a family with a newborn $7.00 in a week of diapers alone. This saving plays out in groceries, diapers, and feminine hygiene products. Families are playing tug of war with which basic necessity they will be able to pay for. This crisis will continue until the Legislatures pass SB 377 and gives these families a much needed relief.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you the realities too many families are facing today and the opportunities to come before you all. Please reach out to me at Abriona@topekadoula.org if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Abriona Markham
Executive Director