



March 7, 2022

Testimony In Support of Senate Bill 12

House Committee on Children and Seniors

Chair: Representative Susan Concannon

Vice-Chair: Representative Charlotte Esau

Ranking Minority Member: Representative Jarrod Ousley

Representative Cheryl Helmer, Representative Jo Ella Hoye, Representative Timothy Johnson, Representative Lisa Moser, Representative Cindy Neighbor, Representative Patrick Penn, Representative Chuck Smith, Representative Kent Thompson, Representative Lindsay Vaughn and Representative Paul Waggoner

Good afternoon to each of the members of the House Committee on Children and Seniors. Thank you so much for the opportunity to testify in written format in support of Senate Bill 12.

Kansas Family Advisory Network, Inc (KFAN) is a faith-based, nonprofit organization that provides support, education, advocacy, training, and spiritual support to at-risk families throughout Kansas. KFAN is also in the process of building a statewide, evidence-based Kinship Navigator Program in partnership with the Department for Children and Families (DCF) and the Capacity Building Center for the States.

In 2019, KFAN had the opportunity to do parent surveys across Kansas and hear the voices of birth families throughout 29 counties involved in the child welfare system. In 2021, KFAN was able to survey and hear the voices of families from all walks of life across 50 counties in Kansas. KFAN has received 63 new family and kinship referrals since January, 2022 from agencies and organizations across Kansas. Serving families is a privilege and at KFAN, we believe in advocating for the restoration of families.

KFAN supports Senate Bill 12 because families need to know that everyone, they are interacting with will provide the best service possible. DCF has made remarkable strides to be accountable as well as transparent to legislators, community partners, the public and to the families they assist. However, with upcoming elections, the leadership of DCF can change as well as all the work they have done to improve our child welfare system. This bill can ensure that the openness and accountability we have seen, will continue across time and elections and children and families can count on Kansas to do what is in their best interest.

Kansas Family Advisory Network would like to thank you for your time and consideration of this legislation on behalf of the children and families of Kansas.

Respectfully Submitted,

Min. Nina Shaw-Woody. LMSW
Executive Director