



CITY OF MCPHERSON FIRE DEPARTMENT

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FIRE CHIEF T.J. WYSSMANN

Dear Representatives,

Current State Statute 38-2282 (Newborn Infant Protection Act) requires a person who surrenders an infant who is 60 days or younger to first responders or a medical care facility defined by K.S.A. 64-425. Such employee shall, without a court order, take physical custody of an infant surrendered pursuant to this section. A relinquishing parent voluntarily surrendering an infant under this subsection shall not be required to reveal personally identifiable information but may be offered the opportunity to provide information concerning the infant's family or medical history.

- Lack of knowledge about this law and remaining anonymous has historically produced catastrophic and devastating results of babies being abandoned. McPherson has experienced this type of incident firsthand. A mother abandoned her baby in a poly cart trash can, where thankfully a City of McPherson Police Officer found the baby before trash services dumped the poly cart.
- Many women in crisis want and need to remain anonymous when surrendering an infant, either because of fear of being recognized, the stigma associated with the surrender, or fear of prosecution due to lack of knowledge and misunderstanding of the Newborn Infant Protection Act.

We are pursuing an amendment of the current legislation (Newborn Infant Protection Act) to allow Baby Boxes. This would allow options and promote awareness to persons who surrender an infant. Avoiding the fear, stigma, misunderstanding, and hopefully avoiding any future incidents.

It is still encouraged to conduct a face-to-face surrender as it benefits both the mother and infant. There are hotlines that provide counseling to women in crisis and only suggest the Baby Box as a last option.

We are requesting an amendment to State Statute 38-2282 Newborn Infant Protection Act to allow the installation and use of Baby Boxes in the State of Kansas.

The City of McPherson Police narrative of the incident is attached, as well as the news documents regarding the case.

T.J. Wyssmann
Fire Chief
City of McPherson, Kansas
