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Erin Melton, Food Security Policy Advisor
Kansas Action for Children
Written-only opposition testimony on HB 2717
House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

Chairman Barker and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 2717. Kansas Action for Children is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization working to make Kansas a place where **every** child has the opportunity to grow up healthy and thrive.

“Every child” includes children in and aging out of foster care, children experiencing homelessness, children whose parents are fleeing domestic violence, and children of immigrants. These Kansans are often overlooked in the Legislature and other systems that are funded to support families in crisis.

There are several aspects of HB 2717 that KAC opposes, including its unfunded mandate on local police to prioritize the enforcement of federal law; its harm to public safety by discouraging cooperation with law enforcement and the court system; and the confusion and distrust it would create around municipal IDs.

HB 2717 preempts Kansas municipalities from deciding what makes the most sense to keep their communities safe and healthy. Requiring that local law enforcement share information with federal agencies will have the effect of discouraging community members from trusting the local officials who are supposed to keep them safe. This would not only affect the families for whom HB 2717 would have a chilling effect. For instance, if people living in a community are afraid to report violence or abuse, entire neighborhoods, communities, and cities will suffer, as will the relationships between officers and their communities. This puts law enforcement in more dangerous and precarious positions within the communities they have a duty to protect.

Municipal IDs are important for many Kansas children and families. For mixed-status households, families experiencing homelessness, households fleeing domestic violence, and foster families, government-issued identification like birth certificates or passports are often inaccessible. Municipal IDs are crucial for the children – immigrant children and children who are U.S. citizens alike – in these families to access community resources like school registration, learner’s permits and driver’s licenses, and applications for public assistance, housing, and jobs.



A clear distinction between municipal and state IDs already exists. HB 2717 would unnecessarily require municipalities to place language on the ID cards themselves saying they are not state IDs. This is a redundancy that could lead to confusion and administrative burden for the municipalities that already provide IDs, including Topeka, which may now have to reissue existing IDs to be in compliance with state law.

Receiving new sets of identification would be difficult, unfair, and potentially harmful for the populations who rely on them. If a mother and her child have left an abusive father and are seeking permanent housing, they could be suddenly caught without any identification documents when this rule changed. Worse, the notification of change could be sent to an old address, alerting the abusive party that they are in a vulnerable position.

For current and future municipal ID programs, the language this bill would require on ID cards would be confusing and likely a disincentive for both use and acceptance, especially for mixed-immigration status families. HB 2717 would have a particularly harsh, chilling effect on these Kansans who already fear accessing not just resources and services for their children, but also the criminal justice system whose mission is to keep communities safe.

This bill would undermine the very purpose of these programs, which is to ensure that all Kansans have access to the services and resources they need, and instead perpetuates the lack of resources Kansas families already face. We urge you to oppose HB 2717.

Thank you for the opportunity to share information with you today. Feel free to reach me if you have any questions at erin@kac.org.