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Department of Social And Rehabilitation
Services

Senate Committee on Judiciary
March 8, 2011

Testimony in Support of SB 94

Children and Family Services
Tanya Keys, Director

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Chairman Owens and members of the committee, I am Tanya Keys, Director of Children and Family Services with the Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 94.

SRS appreciates the importance of extended family and persons with close emotional ties in the life of a child. During initial work with families SRS efforts include attempts to collect information about relatives or persons with close emotional ties. Relatives and persons with close emotional ties may serve as support for the parents or as a placement option. Further, they are an invaluable resource to the child as a familial connection, support, and mentoring.

SRS's early attempts to collect this information will serve to assist the court to make reasonable efforts to provide notice of the temporary custody hearing to any known first degree relatives of the child and anyone with whom the child has close emotional ties. Additionally, if the information is unavailable to SRS, the court's inherent authority to require the parents provide the Secretary of SRS with any available contact information for any known relatives and individuals with whom the child has close emotional ties would assist locating potential placement and support for the child.

SRS supports SB 94 and the improvements it provides to families involved in the child welfare system.