

# kchealthykids™

February 9, 2016

Ashley Jones-Wisner  
State Policy Director, KC Healthy Kids  
HB 2595, Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee

Chairman Hutton and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns about House Bill 2595. KC Healthy Kids is a Kansas City area non profit focused on reducing childhood obesity by shaping policies to improve access to healthy food.

## Importance of Health and Nutrition of Kansans

- **Currently, 30% of Kansas children age 10-17 are considered overweight or obese** by BMI measures. The prevalence of overweight and obesity in Kansas among children in poor families is more than double the rate for children in higher-income families (45.1% to 20.6%)
- **Kansas ranks 13<sup>th</sup> in the nation for adult obesity, with an obesity rate of 31.3%**
- According to the 2010 *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, eating and physical activity patterns that are focused on consuming fewer calories, making informed food choices, and being physically active can help people attain and maintain a healthy weight, reduce their risk of chronic disease, and promote overall health.

## Regulatory concerns

- HB 2595 goes against the goals of the appointed Kansas Local Food and Farm Task Force, which recently released its Legislative Report containing policy and funding recommendations for expanding and supporting local food systems. Assessing and overcoming obstacles necessary to increase locally grown food production is an objective for the task force.
- This bill will halt existing growth and momentums of food policy councils, community gardens and other local initiatives that support increased access to healthy food across Kansas communities
- Ties the hands of local authority to deal with some of the most pressing public health concerns in Kansas today, including diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and other chronic diseases associated with obesity and poor nutrition.
- The state has shown no interest, intention or capacity to fill the void that would be left if this legislation were to become law.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the committee oppose HB 2595.