

State of Kansas
House of Representatives

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Daniel R. Hawkins
House Majority Leader
Representative, 100th District

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Laura Kelly
Governor, State of Kansas
300 SW 10th
Topeka, KS 66612

Governor Kelly:


I am writing to notify you that it has once again been brought to my attention that the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) is not complying with current state law. Specifically, the provisions regarding identity protection related to public benefits found in K.S.A. 39-709(b)(15)(A) also known as part of the HOPE Act.

This provision requires the secretary for children and families to place a photograph of the recipient on their Kansas benefits card, if agreed to by the recipient. It is worth noting that this provision does not prevent any person from receiving benefits, rather the provision provides common sense safeguards to ensure taxpayer dollars are not used illegally by allowing a photo of the recipient to be placed on their Kansas benefits card. The rampant unemployment fraud our state has recently experienced at the Department of Labor only reinforces the need for safeguards to prevent fraudulent usage of taxpayer dollars.

It has also been brought to my attention that DCF received approval from the USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) in 2017 to implement this provision. I am requesting that your Administration confirm DCF received such a letter and I am requesting a copy. In addition, I am requesting an update on the status of the identity theft provisions contained in K.S.A. 39-709(b)(15)(A).

Your administration recently noted its concern regarding identity theft and rampant fraud occurring with unemployment insurance claims in Kansas. I am pleased that you have acknowledged the need for robust program integrity and look forward to hearing from your administration on its efforts to do the same with Kansas benefit cards.

Respectfully,


Rep. Dan Hawkins
House Majority Leader
District 100

Cc: Secretary Laura Howard