

STATE CAPITOL
TOPEKA, KS 66612
O: (785) 296-7656
kristen.o'shea@senate.ks.gov



KRISTEN O'SHEA
SENATOR 18TH DISTRICT
4630 NW TIMBER CT.
TOPEKA, KS 66618

KRISTEN O'SHEA
STATE OF KANSAS
SENATOR

February 14, 2024

SB489
Proponent
Oral Testimony

To Senator Beverly Gossage and Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce:

The Topeka Correctional Facility is the state's only women's prison. There are roughly 800 women there and roughly 20 a year that give birth or come into the facility being pregnant.

Right now, these moms to be go to the hospital like any other mom and spend two days with their precious newborn. Then they part ways. Baby goes to family, friends or unfortunately, enter the foster care system.

If your heart and mind aren't in a tailspin at this point, I'm not sure why not. After birth, Mom needs baby and baby needs mom. Right now for my baby inside of me I am the sole source of food and I will continue to be for the first 5 months of life on this earth and a main source for at least a year. When baby needs to eat I need to nurse and when I need to nurse baby needs to eat. It is a natural rhythm that God has built inside of moms and babies.

We modeled this bill after the MO prison nursery program that passed just last year. Kansas could become the 11th state to have a nursery program. KDOC has been studying other successful states such as Nebraska who has had this program since 1994. KDOC and the team at Topeka Correctional Facility have also been preparing for this and have a long list of donors and volunteers eager to make it happen!

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristen O'Shea".

Kristen O'Shea
Senator District 18
785.296.7656