

**From:** [Lilly Alexander](#)  
**To:** [Public Testimony](#)  
**Subject:** Public Testimony for Agenda Item #250419 - Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee - June 3, 2025  
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Dear Neighborhood Planning and Development Committee,

On behalf of Upwards, we are proud to express our strong support for the Kansas City Tri-Share Child Care Program for First Responders. This program offers a constructive way to support officers while strengthening community trust through measurable outcomes and responsible stewardship of public funds.

Kansas City's first responders face persistent challenges related to burnout, absenteeism, and turnover due to the lack of affordable, flexible childcare. Within KCPD specifically, 75% are in their prime caregiving years and 20% are women, highlighting the need for family support services. These pressures affect individual families across all participating departments, impacting the operational readiness and continuity of essential services across the city. Supporting first responder families creates stability that enables better training, community engagement, and the kind of consistent service that builds public trust across all emergency services.

This program is a smart, timely investment with built-in accountability measures. By covering up to \$1,000 per child per month in childcare expenses, the Tri-Share model is designed to meet the realities of nontraditional work schedules and reduce the personal and financial pressures facing emergency personnel. With a combined \$6 million in state and local funding, the program is estimated to support over 500 first responders in its first year based on workforce data and similar program participation rates.

Programs like this are already delivering results in other cities. In Park City, Utah, a \$1.485 million childcare subsidy for municipal employees generated a minimum of \$4.64 million in measurable economic impact—including \$1.84 million from retained employment, \$2.76 million from reduced turnover, and \$43,000 from increased work hours—yielding a 213% return on investment, or \$3.13 in value for every \$1 invested. Similarly, in Baltimore, Maryland, female representation within public safety roles increased by four points in just five months of launching a city-led childcare initiative, demonstrating that accessible childcare plays a critical role in attracting and retaining early- and mid-career professionals.

As cities navigate difficult fiscal decisions and demands for greater public safety accountability, this program stands out for its cost-effectiveness and transparency. For every \$1 the state and city contribute, the program is projected to avoid up to \$2.25 in preventable costs associated with turnover, recruitment, and lost readiness across police, fire, and emergency medical services. These are real savings at a time when maximizing return on public investment and demonstrating measurable outcomes is more important than ever.

This program positions Kansas City to build a more stable, professional first responder

workforce across all departments. By reducing the financial stress that can contribute to burnout and turnover, we create conditions for personnel to engage more meaningfully with community service initiatives, and the kind of consistent relationships that strengthen public trust in emergency services.

As the proposed administrator, Upwards brings experience running efficient, accountable childcare subsidy programs for public-sector employees. In Missouri and across the country, we've helped military families, municipal staff, and frontline workers get the support they need while maintaining transparent reporting and measurable outcomes. We commit to providing regular progress reports to city leadership and the community, ensuring this program serves as a model of responsible public investment.

We look forward to working alongside city and state partners to make this program a success for Kansas City's first responders and the communities they serve, with the transparency and accountability that Kansas City taxpayers deserve.

Very respectfully,  
Lilly Alexander

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