



**United Way of
Northwest Michigan**

June 14, 2021

Chair Wakeman and members of the House Families, Children and Seniors Committee,

At United Way of Northwest Michigan our mission is to mobilize the caring power of our community to ensure that every child has a strong foundation for the future, that hard working individuals and families have the opportunity to thrive and that those in crisis have resources readily available. Recently United Way of Northwest Michigan has made a considerable investment in early childhood education and success. With that being said, while we support the intention of House Bill 4543, there is no conclusive evidence that monitors prevent or reduce the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and no home monitors are approved by the FDA to prevent SIDS, and therefore we oppose HB 4543.

We all wish to live in a community where no family has to suffer the sudden loss of a child. We know that the best way to prevent SIDs is to follow Safe Sleep guidelines with fidelity. Since Safe Sleep practices were implemented in 1994 there's been a dramatic decline in the number of SIDs deaths. Even with all of that evidence, there are still many child care providers that are not in compliance with these practices and many families are not aware of the principals.

There many factors that contribute to an increased occurrence of SIDs. Prenatal substance use exposure and maternal health play a large role in the epidemiology of SIDs. We also know that children that are breastfeed are at a lower risk of SIDs. Ensuring that families and mothers have access to treatment, classes and education, and proper nutrition should be considered by the committee as a method to reduce the incidence of SIDs in our community.

In conclusion, while we all wish to live in a world where no family has to suffer the sudden loss of a child, no home monitors are approved by the FDA to prevent SIDS, monitors are not fool-proof and may not detect apnea event. At this time, there is no substitute for following the Safe Sleep practices, ensuring all child care providers are in compliance with Safe Sleep practices, and that staff are present and attentive in the room when children are sleeping.

We look forward to answering any questions and further dialogue with the committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Seth Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "S" and "J".

Seth Johnson
Executive Director
United Way of Northwest Michigan

United Way of Northwest Michigan works to connect and mobilize the caring power of our communities by advancing the common good.

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