

Speech to the Joint Child Welfare Oversight Committee

March 28, 2025

By Meghann R. Miller

Ten days ago, I did something I never thought I'd have to do. I filed my **first-ever federal lawsuit** against the Kansas Department for Children and Families.

Because on **January 29, 2024**, I lost all contact with my five children—ripped away by a Johnson County judge who relied entirely on a sealed therapy report I was never allowed to see.

No due process.

No ability to confront or cross-examine.

No opportunity to present evidence.

Just... gone.

But here's what the court didn't see:

Just a week before that order, DCF Investigator Michelle Merritt had already interviewed my children.

She found **no abuse**.

In her own words—recorded—she said, *"I had no concerns."*

She told me the case would be **unsubstantiated** and **closed**.

She even said, *"I feel like at this point, dad's doing some harm."*

But DCF didn't close the case.

They sat on it.

They stayed silent.

So I fought harder.

I logged every call, email, voicemail, and text from May to October 2024—**begging DCF for the letter** they promised. (See Exhibit D.)

Meanwhile—**behind my back**—my children's GAL, Randy McCalla, was in **direct communication** with DCF.

His invoice shows it clearly:

Emails, texts, and phone calls on 6/7, 6/10, and 6/13 of 2024.

While I was desperately chasing the truth—**they were burying it.**

On **December 19, 2024**, I emailed DCF leadership and every member of this committee— **formally demanding** they release the unsubstantiated findings and close the case.

I followed up again on **January 20, 2025**, pleading for answers.

After more than a year of silence, I finally received a letter from **DCF General Counsel Marc Altenbernt** on **January 22, 2025**—confirming what I already knew:

The accusations were **unsubstantiated**. The delay? An **“unintentional oversight.”**

An oversight?

My five children lost their mother, their pets, their life with me—for **over a year**. And DCF calls it an **oversight**?

Then the **very next day—January 23, 2025**—someone called in another report. This time? **My social media**.

A DCF supervisor, **Ashley Beecham**, accused me of emotionally abusing my children—

children I hadn't seen in a year—
because I dared to speak publicly.

This is not child protection. This is agency retaliation.

DCF has **terrorized** my family.

Over the years, my children were repeatedly pulled from school and interrogated over fabricated claims. They were asked:

- Do you have food?
- Do your cats pee on your beds?

- Does your mom buy you clothes?

Statements I can't even repeat here.

All lies.

And DCF never once held the false reporters accountable.

I witnessed this again **just days ago—on March 27, 2025—in Gardner, Kansas**. Another parent stood before a judge, accused of emotional abuse from a DCF report.

They weren't allowed to speak.

They weren't allowed to see the evidence against them.

They went home to an empty house that night.

That is not due process.

That is a constitutional crisis.

Parents should have the right to defend themselves. They have the right to see the evidence. They have the right to cross-examine witnesses and confront false accusations.

What's happening across Kansas—behind courtroom doors and inside DCF—is a **Silent Epidemic**.

And it must end.

Here is what must change:

Guarantee due process in all child welfare and custody proceedings.

No more secret reports. No more sealed therapy records. No more decisions made without cross-examination or the ability to present evidence.

End anonymous reporting without hard evidence. False reports must carry consequences.

Punish concealment of exculpatory evidence. DCF withheld a clearance letter for a year. That is **obstruction**.

Stop traumatizing children with baseless investigations and interrogations. Child protection should **never feel like an attack**.

I'm not just fighting in court—I'm **fighting here**, in front of you.

This is my sworn truth.

These are my exhibits.

And this is my **federal lawsuit** against DCF.

Read them. Investigate them. Act on them.

Because if you don't—

more children will be taken.

Not because they're in danger—

But because no one in power had the courage to stop it.

Thank you.