

February 5, 2021

The Honorable Carri Hicks  
2300 N. Lincoln Boulevard  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105



Dear Senator Hicks:

We join with 4 Oklahoma Safe Kids coalitions in support of SB 98, a bill to ban the sale of crib bumpers and their use in day care facilities because of the suffocation risk they present to infants. Senator Hicks, we applaud your leadership in introducing this important, life-saving legislation.

Infant suffocation is a national tragedy and, adding to the tragedy is the fact that they can be prevented. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, unintentional suffocation is the top cause of death for children under one year.<sup>1</sup> Of most concern in Oklahoma, our state is among the most deadly set of states for sudden unexpected infant deaths (SUID) for the years 2014-2018, 152.7 to 178.3 deaths for 100,000 live births.<sup>2</sup> To complete the sad narrative of infant suffocation are stories. For example, a 7-month-old boy in Pushmataha County was found dead lying face down in a crib with blankets, a bumper pad, a stuffed animal, and clothing – all of which pose risks of suffocation.<sup>3</sup>

Crib deaths can be prevented by using the time-tested best practice that a bare crib is best, free of loose fabric and cushy or puffy surfaces, including blankets, pillows, comforters, quilts, stuffed toys or crib bumpers.<sup>4</sup> According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, there is no evidence that crib bumpers prevent injuries, but rather they pose a risk of suffocation, strangulation, or entrapment.<sup>5</sup> The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has explained how crib bumpers pose a risk: "Without sufficient airflow, infants can suffocate when they roll against the crib bumper and become wedged between bumper and mattress, or when the pillow-like surface of the bumper completely obstructs their mouth and nose."<sup>6</sup>

In addition to banning the sale of crib bumpers, the bill would forbid their use in childcare centers, already barred by Department of Human Services (DHS) regulation. With passage of SB 98, Oklahoma would take a leadership role on this aspect of infant suffocation in the U.S. The CPSC unanimously approved a proposed federal safety standard prohibiting the sale of padded, pillow-like bumpers that fail to meet minimum airflow requirements.<sup>4</sup>

Again, we thank you for your leadership on this important measure and you can count on Safe Kids Oklahoma to provide further support.

Sincerely,

Safe Kids Oklahoma led by The Children's Center Rehabilitation Hospital  
Safe Kids OKC Metro led by Oklahoma Children's Hospital at OU Health  
Safe Kids Na-I-Sha led by The Apache Nation  
Safe Kids Tulsa led by The Children's Hospital at St. Francis

Contact: Kim Gray, Safe Kids Oklahoma, Children's Center Rehabilitation Hospital, [kgray@tccokc.org](mailto:kgray@tccokc.org), 405.470.2304

---

References:

- <sup>1</sup> Causes of Injury Death, Centers for Disease Control, 2018. [Available here.](https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/pdf/leading_causes_of_injury_deaths_highlighting_unintentional_2018-508.pdf)  
[https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/pdf/leading\\_causes\\_of\\_injury\\_deaths\\_highlighting\\_unintentional\\_2018-508.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/pdf/leading_causes_of_injury_deaths_highlighting_unintentional_2018-508.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup> SUID Rates per 100,000 live births, Centers for Disease Control. [Available here.](#)
- <sup>3</sup> “Oklahoma Watch: Autopsies reveal continuing infant deaths tied to unsafe sleeping,” September 5, 2017. *Tulsa World*. [Available here.](#)
- <sup>4</sup> “Crib Buying Guide,” *Consumer Reports*, May 2, 2016. [Available here.](#)
- <sup>5</sup> Jenco M, “Report presents additional concerns about crib bumpers,” May 19, 2017, American Academy of Pediatrics. [Available here.](#)
- <sup>6</sup> “CPSC Advances Rulemaking on Crib Bumpers to Protect Infants; Proposed Rule Would Remove Padded, Pillow-like Bumpers from the Market,” March 26, 2020. [Available here.](#)



the children's center  
REHABILITATION HOSPITAL

