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Senate Judiciary Committee
Testimony in Support of House Bill 2170

Chairman King and Members of the Committee,

I am Stuart Little appearing on behalf of the Kansas Community Corrections Association (KCCA).

Overview

I want briefly to provide some background information on what community corrections and KCCA are so that you might be more aware of this critical component in the community correction systems in Kansas.

Community corrections agencies are thirty-one statutorily mandated programs in each part of the state, governed by county commissions and community advisory boards for both adult and juvenile offenders. They provide cost-effective community-based supervision instead of prison for adult and juvenile offenders with lower severity level offenses (although the offenders are increasingly more severe and high-risk). The courts and sentencing guidelines determine whether an adult offender is assigned to regular probation (through the courts) or intensive supervise probation with graduated sanctions in a community corrections program. Juveniles are also sent to community corrections by district courts through the juvenile offender placement matrix.

Kansas Community Corrections Association is the voluntary association comprised of twenty-eight community corrections agencies and seven affiliated groups. I am here today representing these thirty-five member agencies.

House Bill 2170

The Kansas Community Corrections Association supports House Bill 2170. Our members are the agency of the state that will carry out the sentencing changes in House Bill 2170 and we participated in crafting the law. We do not believe the bill diminishes public safety or provides any less rigorous sanctions for those we supervise. The bill is not being imposed on Kansas by an outside entity but is the result of their efforts and the participation of all affected parties. We participated in the lengthy and thorough process with the Council of State Governments on their study and with the Kansas Sentencing Commission who crafted this bill.

KCCA supports the goals of this legislation:

- Implement community-based sanctions and treatment for high risk offenders
- Provide swift and certain responses to minor violations without lengthy and costly hearings
- Smartly focuses resources on higher risk offenders more likely to violate or reoffend

- Rewards compliant, low-risk offenders and focuses resources on high-risk and those likely to recidivate

I would be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.