

Testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 274  
Senate Transportation Committee - January 30, 2018

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill No. 274. My name is Joe Saia, and I am the husband of the late Glenda Taylor, who was killed in June of 2015 by a pickup truck that struck her from behind while riding her bicycle in Crawford County, Kansas. She was warming up for the Kansas State Bicycle Time Trial Championships, which is an individual bike race against the clock. She was a talented athlete, runner, cyclist, potter, teacher, artist, and was the Chair of the Washburn University Art Department for many years. She was the most extraordinary human being I have ever known on this earth, and I was lucky enough to have her in my life for 29 years.

There were 75 amateur cyclists competing that day on the freshly asphalted two lane highway 146 in the town of Walnut. Many of these cyclists were on the road warming up for the competition, amid tents, and large orange warning signs and cones. The driver of the pickup, slowed down to a crawl as he passed the race starting ramp. He admitted to being aware of the race at that time, and even remarked to his passenger that he saw Glenda at ½ mile away, and then again at ¼ mile away. Gouge marks in the asphalt from Glenda's broken bicycle seat tube indicated that she was riding just 13 inches inside of the white line on the right side of the road. At 8:25 AM she was struck from behind by the full front of the truck with no apparent evasive actions being taken. Upon impact she was thrown 169 feet into the roadside ditch. Bones in both of her arms and legs, above and below her elbows and knees, were instantly broken by the vicious blunt force trauma. Her aortic artery was torn from her heart, and her pelvis was crushed. She did not stand a chance against this vehicle presumably travelling at 35 mph. She died quietly in that ditch, while being held by another cyclist.

The County Sherriff and deputies, the District Attorney, and all of their Crawford County supporting staff were wonderful to me, my family and friends. The driver of the pickup was charged with reckless 2<sup>nd</sup> degree murder and arrested. This charge was ultimately plead down to involuntary vehicular homicide. He was

sentenced to 36 months in the state penitentiary, but was granted full probation and just a 60 day county jail sentence. In May 2017, while on probation, he was charged with running a stop sign at 50 mph. While waiting for his probation hearings under a "no drive" court order, he drove to a gas station, filled his tank, and drove off without paying; with everything recorded on a security camera. His license was rescinded at his felony probation hearing, and he received an additional 30 days in the county jail. He will be released from jail tomorrow, and could once again continue to be a threat to Kansans.

If Senate Bill No. 274 was in effect prior to the summer of 2015, stronger action by law enforcement and the court might have occurred. This Bill, if enacted, could provide more options, more legal leverage, and an incentive to motorists to drive with more care. It could ultimately cut down on the number and severity of these kinds of terrible incidents that took the life of my lovely wife. All of the people of Kansas would feel the benefit of this Bill, not just cyclists, pedestrians or innocent motorists.

Please do what you can to get Bill 274 turned into Kansas Law. Thank you for coming here today to listen to us speak about this Bill's importance.