



AT&T Kansas  
220 SE Sixth Avenue  
Room 505  
Topeka, KS 66603

## **Testimony on HB2524**

Senate Utilities Committee

Friday, March 16, 2018

Chairman Olson and Members of the Senate Utilities Committee:

I appear before you today to testify in support of HB2524. Today, cell phones play an essential role in the everyday life of the average Kansan. Nearly everyone has a cell phone that serves as a lifeline to family, friends, and support services.

Currently, there is no clear mechanism for victims of domestic violence or stalking to unilaterally modify a cell phone contract/account or the devices on an account if they are not the named primary account holder. Most often, one person is the account holder for all the wireless devices in a household. If the primary account holder is also the abuser or stalker, they can use their status as primary account holder to control and monitor their victim's cell phone, track or discover the victim's whereabouts, and prevent the victim from removing their device from the account.

HB2524 would allow victims of domestic violence or stalking to obtain a court order to separate their cell phone, as well as those of their children, from an abuser's or stalker's account. The bill enables victims to keep their existing device, telephone number and contacts, all of which are critical for accessing safety and support resources. It should also be noted the victim's information will be protected from the abuser or stalker during and after the transfer of the device to a new account. Once the transfer is complete, the victim will assume financial responsibility over the new account, which provides an added layer of separation and security.

HB2524 makes it easier for victims of domestic violence and stalking to remove themselves from an abusive situation by giving them control of their wireless device and account. As a result of this legislation, victims of domestic violence and stalking can have more peace of mind, knowing their abuser or stalker cannot monitor their whereabouts or their phone use because the abuser or stalker no longer controls their account.

On behalf of AT&T, I respectfully ask for your support of HB2524. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Koupal  
Area Manager of External Affairs  
AT&T