

State of Kansas  
House of Representatives

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Stephanie Clayton  
Representative, 19th District

COMMITTEES:  
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Education  
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House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee  
Attn: Linda Kentch, Committee Assistant

**RE: Testimony in Favor of HB 2208**

Dear Chairman Jennings, Vice-Chairman Delperdang, and Ranking Minority Member Highberger, and Members of the Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee –

I appear before you today in support of HB 2208, which allows punishment for attempted sexual extortion and those convicted be required to register under sex offender requirements.

This issue involves perpetrators obtaining private, often sexually explicit, images of their victims by hacking into their computers or smartphones or by pretending to be friends or peers on social networking sites. Perpetrators then use the threat of distribution to demand sex or additional sexually explicit images. Fear of exposure leads many victims, often teens and young women, to comply with the perpetrators' demands. As these crimes occur over the internet, perpetrators can victimize multiple, or even hundreds, of victims. Sextortion is not a new crime, but it is proliferating in the digital age. Traditionally, sextortion was perpetrated by abusers who knew their victims, today anyone with a computer keyboard can exert power over their victims.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) reports 78% of reported victims are girls, with an average age of 15. The FBI has identified sextortion as "the most significantly growing threat to children."

Existing Kansas law does not satisfactorily address the full range of extortion crimes, in the digital age. In many cases, perpetrators go unpunished or are charged with lesser crimes because existing law does not punish the threat of sextortion. This bill addresses these shortcomings allowing for prosecution of threats to release such images and use of blackmail regarding voluntarily obtained images.

Given that this bill only expands existing law to cover threat instead of just action, and the clear threat it poses to children across this state I ask the committee to support this expanded law. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and to all committee members for the opportunity to be heard.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Stephanie Clayton', written over a horizontal line.

Stephanie Clayton  
State Representative – 19th District