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Testimony in Support of The Community Defense Act HB 2403

Kansas House, Federal and State Affairs Committee

Kansas Catholic Conference: Jeanette Pryor, Policy Specialist jeanette@KansasCatholic.org

Thursday, March 11, 2021

Thank you Chairman Barker and members of the Federal and State Affairs Committee for the opportunity to offer testimony on HB 2403, the Support the Community Defense Act (CDA). The Kansas Catholic Conference—the public policy arm of the Catholic Bishops of Kansas—strongly supports this measure.

The reasonable and constitutional time, place and manner restrictions on Sexually Oriented Businesses' (SOBs) represents a well-worn “common sense” path for the courts and consistently polls at a 68% support rate among Kansans. CDA has enjoyed a super majority vote passage in the House in 2011, and now the new Senate would likely concur. The courts have consistently ruled that SOBs are not engines of economic prosperity but have proven damaging effects on communities, such as increased sexual crime, human trafficking, blight and sexually transmitted diseases.

Communities are easily intimidated by threats coming from the well-financed and highly litigious sex industry. Kansas communities need the state support that the CDA provides.

Allow me to conclude with an historical reminder. On March 30, 2017, the Kansas House of Representatives passed a RESOLUTION recognizing that pornography is a public health hazard that leads to a broad spectrum of individual and public health impacts and societal harms. The vote was 123-1. This resolution was carried by Representative Chuck Weber, who now serves as executive director of the Kansas Catholic Conference.

That resolution stated—in part:

MOST REVEREND JOHN B. BRUNGARDT, D.D.
DIOCESE OF DODGE CITY

MOST REVEREND JOSEPH F. NAUMANN, D.D.
Board Chairman
ARCHDIOCESE OF KANSAS CITY IN KANSAS

MOST REVEREND CARL A. KEMME, D.D.
DIOCESE OF WICHITA

MOST REVEREND GERALD L. VINCKE, S.T.L.
DIOCESE OF SALINA

CHUCK WEBER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Be it resolved by the Kansas House of Representatives of the State of Kansas: That we recognize pornography is a public health hazard that leads to a broad spectrum of individual and public impacts and societal harms; and

Be in further resolved: That we recognize the need for additional education, prevention, research and policy change at the community and societal levels, and we urge this chamber and other governing bodies to take appropriate steps to ensure progress is made.

These are important, worthwhile words.

Now, we respectfully ask that this committee follow through with action by supporting the will of Kansans in reducing the negative effects of pornography and sexually oriented businesses by supporting the Kansas Community Defense Act, HB 2403.

Thank you.

Jeanette Pryor, Policy Specialist
Kansas Catholic Conference