

HB 2536
House Committee on Judiciary
Neutral Testimony
February 8, 2022

Chairperson Patton and Members of the Committee:

The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) is a statewide non-profit organization whose membership is the 25 sexual and domestic violence programs serving victims across Kansas. KCSDV provides information, training, and analysis on issues impacting victims of domestic and sexual violence, their families, and their communities. Our members, the local advocacy programs, are committed to providing quality services to victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, empowering victims to live independently without the ongoing fear of violence, and to help victims secure resources necessary for a safe and healthy future.

HB 2536 addresses some serious issues that face survivors of sexual assault in Kansas. Many of the proposed solutions included in the bill would benefit survivors. Providing information about services available to them and how to access these services would help to ensure that no survivor must navigate the time after their victimization alone. Connecting a survivor with an advocate who can help them process their experiences can dramatically increase the survivor's chances of processing their trauma, addressing any ongoing safety concerns, and healthily moving forward with their lives.

Unfortunately, some of the measures in HB 2536 do not have clear implementation mechanisms. Some of the language is unclear. For example, it is unclear if the definition of an advocate would include those who provide services through a child advocacy center. These facilities provide invaluable resources to child victims of sexual assault.

While KCSDV strongly supports the intent of this bill, we believe that it can be drafted in a way that more clearly addresses all the needs of sexual assault survivors across the state.

Sincerely submitted on behalf of KCSDV,

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