



Testimony on HB2295

Submitted To

The House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee

By

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The Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) appreciates the opportunity to offer a perspective on the proposed changes in House Bill 2295. We are an opponent to the bill.

The tragic event that inspired the introduction of this bill is chilling for any parent, and any person, to think about. And the goal of this bill to reduce the likelihood of a similar victims in the future is admirable and shared by all of us at KDOC. However, in our view creating a reporting requirement for persons who live with offenders supervised in our communities will not improve, and could compromise, public safety.

Our concerns are the potential victimization of persons living with persons supervised in the community, housing instability for supervised individuals and our capacity to implement the notification requirements and respond to notices with our current resources.

Victimization. If I were on supervision (probation, post-release, etc.) in the community and lived with my loved one, what might be the chances that I would threaten, or worse, that loved one so that they would not report me under this law? Probably everyone of us in this room would not make those threats or escalate that to violence against our loved one. But among the offender population the potential for that to happen is significant. And one outcome of this bill could be increased acts of violence in our communities and new victims. Further burdening the resources of our first responders, social service, legal and correctional systems.

Housing Instability. That my loved one might allow me to live in their home while on probation or after release from jail or prison is not necessarily a given. Often that is a tenuous situation and adding an obligation to monitor and report the offender being home or not could result in fewer loved ones providing housing for these offenders. A job that pays a living wage, a place to live and access to transportation are three fundamental needs that are vital to successfully living, or reentering, the community and if this bill were to cause housing instability for some offenders it could have a negative impact on public safety. And the available choice would be increased homelessness or providing taxpayer funded housing for this offender population.

Capacity. On June 30, 2022, KDOC Parole staff supervised 6,426 persons in the community on post-release supervision, supervised by 105 budgeted Parole Officer 1 positions of which 10 are currently vacant. These numbers fluctuate daily and result in caseloads of approximately 67

offenders per officer. These caseloads are too high to absorb the additional tasks of notifying each person who lives with an offender on supervision in the community of their obligation to report if the offender is home, repeat those notices with every housing change, and then respond to notifications received from those who would be required to report under the law. In our fiscal note we estimated that this would add 4 hours of work for each parole officer each week necessitating 12 new full time equivalent (FTE) positions at a cost of \$705,000 each year for hourly pay and benefits.

This bill is clearly well intended, and we appreciate the efforts of the proponents of this bill to improve the safety of all Kansans. And I thank you for the opportunity to describe the potential impact on the supervision of offenders in the community.