



House Corrections & Juvenile Justice Committee

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Presented by:

Rick Cagan

Executive Director

NAMI Kansas is the state organization of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, a grassroots organization whose members are individuals living with mental illnesses and their family members who provide care and support. NAMI Kansas provides programs of peer support and education by and for our members through a statewide network of 15 local affiliates. We advocate for individuals who are living with mental illness to ensure their access to treatment and supportive services.

We urge you to oppose HB 2453 which provides for a fee to be assessed for applications to immediate intervention programs.

We are concerned that Kansas is already an outlier relative to other states in terms of the fees it imposes on juvenile defendants and their families. Overall, Kansas authorizes at least seven types of fees on juvenile defendants and their families.

We believe that establishing a fee structure for access to immediate intervention programs is at odds with the intent of SB 367 enacted in 2016. Such programs should be grant funded by the state.

While HB 2453 prohibits denying eligible youth from participation in an immediate intervention program due to inability to pay the fee, we are concerned with the process for evaluating the family's inability to pay and the inherent risks for increased recidivism on the part of these juvenile defendants related to the burden of being assessed a fee.

This bill does damage to the concepts enacted in SB 367 and creates unnecessary barriers for engaging juvenile defendants in immediate intervention programs.

Thank you for your consideration.