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Office of the Governor

Sam Brownback, Governor

Kansas Senate Judiciary Committee

RE: HB 2234

March 16th, 2017

**BY: Shawn Cowing,
Administrator for the Kansas Governor's Grants Program Office**

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Shawn Cowing and I am the Administrator of the Kansas Governor's Grants Program Office. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee in support of HB 2234 which seeks to amend K.S.A. 65-6009.

The Kansas Governor's Grants Program (KGGP) administers state and federal grant programs to units of state and local government, Native American Tribes, nonprofit, community, and faith-based organizations throughout the state. Grants administered by the KGGP enhance the criminal justice system, improve public safety, support crime victim services, and support drug and violence prevention programs in Kansas.

To that end, the KGGP has applied and received a federal award from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women (OVW), Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Grant Program (ICJR). The purpose of this grant is to encourage state, local, and tribal governments and state, local, and tribal courts to treat domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking as serious violations of criminal law requiring the coordinated involvement of the entire criminal justice system.

The ICJR grant that the State of Kansas has received is a three year grant which is currently being applied to create a consistent, coordinated response to crimes of domestic and sexual violence throughout the Kansas criminal justice and victim services spectrum and to ensure victim safety and

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offender accountability. Additionally, this award looks to establish model communities in Kansas which utilize best practices in ensuring victim safety and offender accountability in the response to domestic and sexual violence through strengthened and revitalized coordinated community response and multi-disciplinary teams.

In accepting this grant award, the Kansas Governor's Grants Program (KGGP) was been informed by the federal administrators of the "Arrest Program", which is administered by the United States Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women, that Kansas law, specifically K.S.A. 65-6009, does not sufficiently conform with federal law (42 U.S.C. § 3796hh), meaning that Kansas is not entitled to utilize 5 percent of total funds awarded to the State under the "Arrest Program" grant, unless the State amends its law to come into conformity with 42 U.S.C. § 3796hh. The change must occur in this 2017 legislative session to meet the condition.

The proposed amendments to K.S.A. 65-6009, both the amendments drafted in HB 2234, and the recommended language will bring our Kansas law into conformity with the federal requirements and will help strengthen victim rights, all while permitting the State to utilize \$45,000 in federal grant money that has already been awarded to Kansas, but will otherwise be returned to the federal government if our law is not changed. Additionally, any future "Arrest Program" funding that the State might apply for and receive to continue this project would again have the same condition.

Sincerely,



Shawn Cowing

Administrator