



House Children and Seniors Committee
February 20, 2019
Testimony in Support of HB 2361
Chairperson Susan Concannon

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Reno County Communities That Care as the Executive Director concerning the "Opt In" vs "Opt Out" issue regarding student privacy. Our coalition has been established since 2003 to address youth alcohol and drug use. The data from the Kansas Communities That Care Youth Survey (KCTC) is key to the decision making of programs, practices, and policies in Reno County. Our percentage rates of students taking the surveys were between 70-80% until the law was passed in 2015. At that time of the passage of the "Opt In" bill, our survey participation dropped to about 40%.

In 2013, our coalition received a Drug Free Communities Grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration which required youth participation in these surveys. In the first year of this grant, we were required to attend the National Coalition Academy for three weeks of the first year of the grant. After the attendance of these, I felt that Kansas was so fortunate to have the KCTC surveys as they are free to every school district and the data is provided for every county in Kansas. In other coalitions across the United States, they were going to have to find evaluators and administrate these surveys themselves. However, in 2015, our numbers of students dropped significantly as mention above. Since then, we have struggled to meet the requirements for youth participation rates of federal and state grants.

We believe that HB 2361 would benefit so many coalitions in the State of Kansas to help us to continue making local data informed decisions and continue funding to help reduce drug and alcohol use among youth in Kansas at the local level.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sondra Borth". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Sondra Borth
1520 N. Plum
Hutchinson, KS 67501
borths@usd308.com