

March 5, 2020

To: Judiciary Committee Members Re: Opponent of Senate Bill 157

Dear Chairperson Patton and House Judiciary Committee Members,

I write to you today in opposition to SB157, and felt the need to express my views as a Kansas State resident on this pending legislation and clarify some given testimony.

First, I would like to provide you with a synopsis of my career background. I am a 13 year retired veteran Police Officer of the Kansas City, Kansas Police Department and have worked for the Miami County, Kansas Sheriff's Department. I have been involved with Law Enforcement my whole life, as I am a second generation Kansas Law Enforcement Officer who followed in my father's footsteps. I have been in the protective services field since 1989 protecting, serving, and helping people in need.

Senate Bill 157 is an abhorrent conceptual view which undermines two parent families, and puts children at risk. Some proponents of this bill say that children should have the right to equally receive love from both parents.

The above statement is simply filler utilized in an attempted ploy to play on ones emotions, and draw sympathy to an advocates cause; in this case, SB157. Love, is not a right; it is an emotion which is felt or shown. Children involved in two parent families I pray, do love both parents and are able to demonstrate that during time with each parent respectively. The introduction of SB157 puts children of divorce / separation at an extremely higher risk for disorders due to a constant fluctuation of change

Instead of an established pattern or routine. Nowhere in the proposed SB157 is it established how often children in these circumstances will be exchanged. With a more frequent exchange of children between parents, I feel would be detrimental for all involved as many situations could result in Domestic Violence occurring between adults. This is not something anyone wants children to see or have it become a learned behavior as a result of these exchanges. It would be a travesty for the State of Kansas, and families involved if a Domestic Violence situation arose which severe injury or death(s) occurred all as a result of essentially SB157.

As a Police Officer, I have witnessed the tragic results of Domestic Violence and children whom have witnessed actions against a parent. Violence can become a learned behavior, behavior learned from a parent whom was given opportunity provided by SB157. Is this what we want for the future generations in the State of Kansas, or are we committed to stamping out these vulgar actions? It is in my opinion SB157 will allow for more opportunity for Domestic Violence situations given the above.

What emotions or torments would you, as the Chairman and members of the Kansas House Judiciary Committee have if as a result of the passage of SB157 learning that a Domestic Violence homicide(s) of one parent, children, and the suicide of the other parent had occurred as a result of this ghastly and naïve law? The blood of innocents would be on your hands and that of the author of it.

Moving on, I would like to address what effect would SB157 have on children's education? Hypothetically, an ex-husband lives in Douglas County, Kansas with his live in girlfriend and the ex-wife lives in Southern Johnson County, Kansas. The children have been placed in residential custody of the

ex-wife, and are enrolled in school in a Southern Johnson County, Kansas school. Are the children going to be enrolled in two different schools, (one in Douglas County, and the other in Johnson County) to accommodate the "shared parenting" of SB157? Is it feasible for the ex-husband to transport the children to and from their school that the ex-wife has them enrolled every day that they are in his care? Is this beneficial to a child's cognitive educational process?

I have heard people say that the standard guidelines parenting plan of every other weekend and Wednesday evenings plan is a bad plan that is failing our state and nation. As a divorced parent myself, I do not see how this is a "bad practice" or how it is failing our state and nation.

As a hypothetical example, a parenting plan consisting of every other Wednesday evening, and every other weekend exists between a divorced / separated couple. The non-residential custodial parent is allowed to pick up the child(ren) Friday evening and return them to the residential custodial parent Sunday evening. Utilizing the January 2020 calendar consisting of thirty one days, parents under this plan would enjoy time with their child(ren) a total of five Wednesday evenings. If the child (ren) is of school age, they would get to spend that time with the non-residential custodial parent and interact with them longer than the residential custodial parent would as the child is in school during the day. There are four weekends in the month of January 2020, divided into "every other weekend" visitation by the non-residential custodial parent. The month of January 2020 four weekends (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) How, pray tell is one parent missing time with their child (ren) when the time allotments are evenly divided?

In Divorce / Custody proceedings heard by the District Court Judges in the 105 Counties in the State of Kansas if this a "common, bad practice" how is

that possible? Each parent is given equal time, isn't that the heart of what SB157 is about? Are we now questioning the ethics of all Kansas Judges?

It is clear that proponents of this bill claiming they do not have equal amounts of time with children are frivolous as is evidenced by the simple task of looking at a calendar and comprehending the prescribed time allotments.

Furthermore, it is clear that the proposed passage of SB157 essentially binds Kansas Judges in the 105 Counties involved in Divorce / Custody proceedings from rendering binding, educated, and informed decision making decrees and as a whole would dismantle a process that has been years in the making.

Chairman and Members of the House Judiciary Committee as our representatives we know that you are acting for the good of the people of the State of Kansas. SB157 is not in the best interests of all the people of the State of Kansas, and one must wonder if a hidden agenda lays behind it with a guised intent.

I implore you, do not endanger Kansas children and the future generations of our nation by voting in favor of SB157. Let us save the child(ren) and parent(s) from so much needless pain and, frankly abuse by guaranteeing no suffering from the hands of a parent in a Domestic Violence tragedy which could end the life of one parent, both parents, or both parents and the child(ren). Let us think of the welfare of the child(ren) in the totality of all circumstances, and how detrimental to the child(rens) cognitive abilities it would be. Your decision to not support SB157 will keep Kansas kids safe,

protect Kansans, and the equal established system that currently is in existence.

Should the House Judiciary Committee desire, I would present myself for any questions or testimony of my opposition to Senate Bill 157.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Shannon Clarke

clarkeesp@gmail.com

(913) 707-1605