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Written Testimony to the Kansas State Judiciary Committee

Kansas State Capitol Building, Room 346S

Topeka, Ks. 66612

Support for Senate Bill 157

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

As a father of 2 biological children and having raised 5 other children from the ages of 4 to adulthood, I am aware of the love of a father and the impact we have on their lives. As a son of a father and mother who raised 15 children as a nuclear family, I am keenly aware of the roles and responsibilities and value each individual in the family. Inasmuch as the changes in our family structures have evolved into its current state, the disconnect of the father has yielded many outcomes we observe today, poverty, mental health issues, disrespect for authority, unintentional teen pregnancies, and further, behavior which as well as being unlawful, cause much of our tax dollars to be used to address and or correct.

I have served as an advocate and mentor for over 10 years in the Fatherhood Movement. My role as a facilitator and mentor for groups such as Dads Dare to Care, a Youthville project, and now as President of the Dads Care 2 Project, based in Wichita, has allowed me to see first- hand the plight of the disconnected father, the overburdened mother, and the double minded children who must navigate life between two locations. The emotions and psychological challenges of the children become the foundation for their frame of reference on how the world works and how the decision making process is developed into adulthood.

The 24 million or more children who, 10 years ago, grew up without their biological father in the home has given us a society which deals with many Adverse Childhood Experiences. The Fatherhood Movement and the positive outcomes as a result of dads reading to their preschool child, going to parent teacher conferences, attending plays, programs, athletic events and interceding when issues arise are life changing.

It is time, as Kansans, that we become part of the growing, back to basics efforts to integrate the family back to the foundation that each part of every family is valuable and can work together to build strong relationships and help our children be successful. Thank you for your support.

Dennis Fontelroy

