

HB 2215
House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice
PROPONENT TESTIMONY
January 26, 2022

Chairman Owens and Members of the Committee:

The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) is a statewide non-profit organization whose membership is the twenty-five sexual and domestic violence programs serving victims across Kansas. KCSDV provides information, training, and analysis on issues impacting victims of domestic and sexual violence, their families, and their communities. Our members, the local advocacy programs, are committed to providing quality services to victims of sexual assault and domestic violence, empowering victims to live independently without the ongoing fear of violence, and helping victims secure the resources necessary for a safe and healthy future.

KCSDV supports the passage of HB 2215. No one should be denied access to food, regardless of their past actions. Passage of this bill would serve to help victims of domestic violence and sexual assault across the state.

Addiction is an unfortunate consequence of domestic violence and sexual assault. Those who have experienced these types of violence often suffer from lingering trauma that can take years to heal. While it is our hope that all victims can access the services they need to process this trauma, it is a regrettable reality that not all victims do. Instead, many victims turn towards substance abuse to manage their pain. With this avenue of self-medication comes a host of new concerns and challenges, including potential incarceration. Given the direct relationship between the trauma suffered by victims and the likelihood of substance abuse, compassion necessitates that Kansas laws do not hinder victims by denying them access to food and the benefits they may need to put their lives back together.

Because safety net services resources can be life-changing for so many victims of domestic and sexual violence, **KCSDV strongly supports the passage of HB 2215.**

Sincerely submitted on behalf of KCSDV,

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