



NAMI
National Alliance on Mental Illness

Kansas

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House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice

Prepared and Presented by:

Itzel Moya, NAMI Kansas AOT Director and lifelong Kansas Resident

House Committee Chair, Representative Stephen Owens, Vice Chair Representative Eric L Smith, and Ranking Minority Member, Representative John Carmichael, thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning **HB 2353**.

My name is Itzel Moya, and I am writing in support of **HB 2353**.

I am a lifelong Kansan who strongly advocates for mental health treatments. I am the NAMI Kansas Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) Project Director, and I have been in this position for over two years.

One of our goals at NAMI Kansas is to advocate to better the lives of individuals with mental illness and their families. In my role with NAMI Kansas, I have had the opportunity to witness the implementation of AOT programs throughout the state. I have witnessed the AOT journey of several participants from start to finish. I have been moved by the improvement in their quality of life by engaging with the program. The person-centered care that is offered by the mental health centers allows these participants to be a key player in their own recovery journey.

AOT aims to motivate and assist individuals to engage in treatment, which leads to a reduction in the likelihood of repeat hospitalization and criminal justice involvement. AOT is a tool that allows civil courts, mental health centers, and community organizations such as NAMI to work collaboratively to help individuals with serious mental illness. AOT recognizes that mental illness is not a crime and recognizes that additional support is sometimes necessary for recovery.

The proposed amendments to **HB 2353** would benefit court-ordered treatment such as Assisted Outpatient Treatment. These amendments would allow mental health centers and civil courts to effectively assist more individuals with court-ordered treatments such as AOT.

Your support for **HB 2353** is greatly appreciated and will benefit many lives!

Thank you for your time,

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