

## **Opponent Testimony**

**House Federal and State Affairs Committee**

**January 23, 2024**

**House Concurrent Resolution 5020**

Good morning, Chairman Carpenter, Vice Chair Kessler, Ranking Member Hoye, and Members of the Committee:

I'm Shannon Little and I'm a volunteer with Kansas Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to House Concurrent Resolution 5020 today.

I'm part of the Columbine High School generation; the first generation of students that had to worry about being shot and killed at school. Now I'm part of the Sandy Hook and Uvalde Elementary School parent generation that worries that our children will be shot and killed at school. Growing up, one of my classmates in high school was shot as a bystander to a fist fight and one summer our family picnic came to an abrupt end when we had to flee from an active shooter.

HCR 5020 would threaten to eliminate some of Kansas' most crucial public safety laws. On its face, HCR 5020 appears to only broaden gun owners' rights in Kansas, but because of the requirement that any gun law must rise to the level of strict scrutiny, the resolution has unintended negative consequences. If passed, this resolution would pave the way for convicted felons and domestic abusers to legally possess firearms in Kansas.

When a strict scrutiny constitutional amendment passed in Missouri, convicted felons challenged state laws that prohibited them from possessing firearms. A similar change in state law in Louisiana led a court to declare the law prohibiting felons from possessing firearms unconstitutional. I ask the members of this committee to reject this resolution and with it the possibility of allowing guns to end up in the hands of convicted felons and domestic abusers here in Kansas.

This resolution would make state taxpayers fund the overflow of lawsuits brought by convicted criminal defendants. In Missouri the state's strict scrutiny law led to significant time and money spent on these cases. The state auditor projected that the strict scrutiny law would ultimately cost Missouri taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.

On behalf of Kansas Moms Demand Action supporters across the state I respectfully urge you to reject HCR 5020 and instead spend your time this legislative session passing laws that will make our state more, not less safe.

To keep our families and communities safe in Kansas, please reject House Concurrent Resolution 5020.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify in opposition to HCR 5020 today and I would be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.