

Testimony of Grace Springer
February 5th, 2025

Good afternoon Chairman Carpenter, Committee members, and staff. Thank you for acknowledging my testimony today.

My name is Grace Springer. I am a Senior at Olathe East High School.

I am testifying today because HCR 5006 is a dangerous resolution that poses a direct threat to Kansas public safety laws that protect our communities by keeping guns out of the hands of people who we all agree shouldn't have them.

March 4th of 2021 my life was changed forever. A student at my school gained access to a firearm, brought it to school, and fired it, resulting in 3 people being injured. The day after I was terrified to go anywhere. I worried that another shooting could happen to me at any time. Grocery stores or movie theaters nowhere I went felt safe. No one deserves to live in a place where gun violence is a constant fear. Over this past year I have watched as Kansas has had gun violence rates increase. I am increasingly concerned about our states safety for my fellow kansans.

My experience leads me to emphasize **that HCR 5006 will result in higher accessibility to guns. This accessibility will lead to more safety concerns.** People shouldn't have to fear going out in public because of the increased accessibility of firearms.

According to *EveryStat* within Kansas In an average year, 463 people die and 858 are wounded by guns in Kansas. Kansas has the 19th highest rate of gun violence in the US.

These numbers have increased since last year compared to when we ranked 22nd in the nation for highest rates of gun violence. In Kansas, 69% of gun deaths are suicides and 28% are homicides. We should not be focusing on loosening our gun laws but rather focusing on passing common sense gun legislation such as secure storage bills. These numbers will only increase if this legislation is passed.

Through the increased accessibility of firearms, there will be a large risk for felons, domestic abusers, and **children** to get their hands on firearms

This bill poses several significant concerns:

If adopted, strict scrutiny would threaten to eliminate Kansas's most crucial public safety laws, including:

- **Prohibition on Gun Possession by Convicted Felons:** After strict scrutiny

amendments passed in Louisiana and Missouri, convicted felons challenged state laws that prohibit felons from possessing firearms. At least one lower court found that Louisiana's law prohibiting felons from having guns was unconstitutional. Fortunately, the Louisiana Supreme Court reversed this ruling.

- **Prohibitions on Gun Possession by Domestic Abusers:** In Louisiana, after strict scrutiny passed, a convicted domestic abuser challenged the constitutionality of a state law prohibiting possession of a firearm by people convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence crimes.

Strict scrutiny laws make state taxpayers fund the flow of lawsuits brought by criminal defendants.

- The Missouri State Auditor determined that Louisiana's strict scrutiny law led to "significant time, effort, and expenditures by Louisiana's public defenders and district attorney's offices," imposing "significant workload and related costs on the Louisiana government." The auditor projected that a strict scrutiny law in Missouri **would ultimately cost Missouri taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.**

I encourage members of the committee to vote **NO** on House **Resolution 5006**. This

concludes my testimony. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify today.

***Please use attached coversheet(this is required for testimony to be accepted!) to submit your testimony in PDF format via email to H.Fed.State.Affairs@house.ks.gov by January 21 at 12pm**

HOUSE FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE