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Bill number: HB2501

Proponent Keith Kass speaking for myself and Greater KC Veterans Coalition

Chairman Kessler and Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on House Bill 2501. I am a US Veteran and have been a member of the Greater KC Veterans Coalition since its inception.

2022 data showed that there were 131 suicides per day for the general US population, and 17.6 veteran suicides per day. For veterans 72% of those suicides were by firearms. House Bill 2501 would enable more people to safely store their firearms in a secure location when they encounter difficult times.

I know from experience how these tough times can happen. Many years ago, I found out my wife of 24 years was having a long-term affair with her boss. We were in counseling and she put the entire reason for the affair on me. I went into a state of depression and started thinking about suicide. The counselor had my wife hide my firearms until I recovered. This bill would provide a safe place to store firearms until the person in need found the help to overcome the situation.

As a veteran it makes me sad to realize we lose so many veterans each day. These are men and women who swore to defend this country and, in many cases, carry the scars, both internal and external from doing their job. Please approve this bill so we can take another step forward in reducing these astonishing numbers.

Thank you for your time and consideration.