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Executive Director

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KANSAS STATEHOUSE OFFICE
Kansas Catholic Conference
204 SW 8th Ave.
Topeka, KS 66603

RE: **IN PERSON OPPONENT TESTIMONY ON HB 2359**

(Note: Our position will change to NEUTRAL if a proposed amendment is adopted.)

From: Chuck Weber, executive director, Kansas Catholic Conference

Date: February 12, 2025

To: Chairwoman Susan Humphries and members of the House Judiciary Committee

Chair Humphries and members of the committee:

My name is Chuck Weber, and I serve as executive director of the Kansas Catholic Conference, the public policy voice of the Catholic Bishops of Kansas.

Our interest in this legislation is focused upon amending current Kansas law regarding end-of-life powers guardian policy. The totality of the bill—nearly 150 pages in length—is complex.

Our specific interest is in support of an amendment to the bill that we understand will soon be offered. We stand in opposition to this bill, unless this amendment is added. If and/or when that occurs, our position will be neutral. We will be satisfied that the bill will do no harm, but we cannot speak with knowledge about the totality or other details of this legislation.

This amendment is currently being drafted by a Revisor and it is our understanding that it will be ready when this Committee works the bill.

The core of our concern is updating Kansas law regarding guardianship/conservatorship in a manner that balances the rights of Kansans with disabilities, most particularly at the end-of-life, with the responsibilities of their guardians/conservators.

The last time these laws were significantly updated in Kansas was 2002. The goal of our involvement is making sure end-of-life issues and Kansas public policy does not discriminate against or harm the right to life for Kansans with disabilities.

The Kansas Catholic Conference joins the other organizational partners in this effort in communicating our grave concern for the current language of HB 2359 regarding end-of-life and guardianship issues.

We would like the members of the Judiciary Committee to know that while for the purposes of this hearing we are deferring detailed questions about the bill and amendment to others, trusted ethicists from our vantage point have reviewed and approved the proposed amendment. We believe the language of the amendment will afford people with disabilities the fullest measure of due process and the best definitions and provisions in law that ensure the protection of life.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 2359.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chuck Weber". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gerald C "Chuck" Weber

316-708-5350

Chuck@KansasCatholic.org