



MANPOWER AND
RESERVE AFFAIRS

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1500 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C.
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February 12, 2025

Chairperson Susan Humphries
Chair, House Committee on Judiciary

Remarks of
Michelle Richart
Midwest Regional Liaison
United States Department of Defense-State Liaison Office

Support of: HB2359 – Relating to the Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act and the Uniform Guardianship, Conservatorship and Other Protective Arrangements Act.

Testimony

Chairperson Humphries and honorable members of the House Committee on Judiciary, the Department of Defense is grateful for the opportunity to support the policies reflected in HB2359, related to the Uniform Adult Guardianship and Protective Proceedings Jurisdiction Act (UAGPPJA) and the Uniform Guardianship, Conservatorship and Other Protective Arrangements Act (UGCOPAA).

My name is Michelle Richart. I am the Midwest Regional Liaison at the DoD-State Liaison Office, operating under the direction of Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. We represent the Department and establish relationships with state leaders across the country who are concerned for troops and their families' welfare by harmonizing state and federal law and regulation on policy problems of national significance. These are identified by the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Departments, and the National Guard Bureau as areas where states can play a crucial role.

HB 2359 is a crucial piece of legislation that would bring much-needed uniformity to guardianship laws in Kansas. This bill directly addresses the challenges faced by military families relocating to our state due to permanent change of station (PCS) orders or other mission requirements.

Currently, Kansas remains one of only a handful of states not a party to one or both of these Acts. This lack of uniformity places undue burdens on military families with adult dependents, forcing them to navigate a complex and costly legal process each time they relocate. The average military family moves every two to three years. This process not only consumes valuable time and resources but also adds significant stress to an already demanding lifestyle.

HB2359 offers a streamlined solution by aligning Kansas with guardianship laws across the country. These widely adopted acts facilitate the seamless transfer of guardianship and related orders across state lines, eliminating redundant legal procedures and easing the transition for military families. By enacting this legislation, Kansas would demonstrate its commitment to supporting our service members and their families, who sacrifice so much for our nation.

Passing HB2359 is not just a matter of legal uniformity; it's about providing vital support to military families and contributing to the readiness and resiliency of our Armed Forces. We urge you to consider the significant positive impact this bill and vote in favor of its passage.

In closing, let me say that we are grateful for the tremendous effort that Kansas has historically given in supporting our service members and their families and thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important policy change.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Michelle Richart".

MICHELLE RICHART
Midwest Regional Liaison
Defense-State Liaison Office