



## Kansas Family Voice Testimony in Support of S.B. 237

House Judiciary

Brittany Jones

March 17, 2025

Chairwoman Humphries, and members of the Committee, my name is Brittany Jones. I am an attorney and the Director of Policy and Engagement for Kansas Family Voice. Kansas Family Voice cares deeply about ensuring our laws protect babies in the womb and ensuring that parents in difficult situations receive the support they need throughout the child's life. Thank you for the opportunity to share with you our reasons for supporting S.B. 237.

According to the most recent numbers more than 12,000 women in Kansas gave birth in the last year who were unmarried.<sup>1</sup> Many of these women may have been a party to custody and child support proceedings. S.B. 237 is a simple bill to ensure that the court has every opportunity to make sure the custodial parent has the resources they need to raise the child and that the other parent is not able to avoid their duty to their child.

It is important that both parents share in the expenses related to raising their child. The custodial parent and the child should not suffer simply because the parent who is required to pay child support has made irresponsible choices that have made it difficult to continue these payments.

This bill does not change the procedures for issuing child support judgements or any other judicial decisions that a court may be making during these proceedings. It simply gives the court another avenue to ensure that the child is being supported and ensure that a parent does not deprive their child of the support they need.

We believe that every parent and child should be surrounded by a system of support. Parents are parents and have a responsibility to care for their children no matter what. All this bill does is ensure that there is another avenue to care for the child and the parent cannot shirk their responsibility to their child by irresponsible or intentional decision making.

For these reasons, we ask that when S.B. 237 comes before you for consideration, you pass it out favorably!

Thank you!

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<sup>1</sup> Kansas Vital Statistics Report, 2023, <https://www.kdhe.ks.gov/DocumentCenter/View/43918/-2023-Annual-Summary-Full-Report-PDF?bidId=>.