

STATE OF KANSAS

STATE CAPITOL  
TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612  
(785) 296-7377  
stephen.owens@senate.ks.gov



TOPEKA  
SENATE CHAMBER

STEPHEN OWENS  
STATE SENATOR 31ST DISTRICT  
P.O. BOX 606  
HESSTON, KANSAS 67062  
(620) 869-9487

Chairman Kellie Warren  
Senate Committee on Judiciary  
Kansas State Capitol  
300 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Topeka, KS 66612

February 12, 2025

RE: Testimony in **SUPPORT** of SB 188 – Unsecured Judicial Release

Chairman Warren & Members of the Committee:

***In full disclosure, this is an industry I have operated for 25+ years and offer my expertise to answer questions and provide input***

This bill accomplishes two important things

- Current practice in many judicial districts is to utilize Own Recognizance (OR) and Personal Recognizance (PR) Bonds and attach a dollar amount. IE: \$50,000 OR Bond. The problem is, this leads the public to believe there is \$50,000 in security pledged or promised when none actually exists. A \$50,000 OR bond is the same as saying it's a \$0 OR Bond or a "promise" to appear. Public safety is absolutely paramount in our state. If a Judge, in their discretion, chooses to release an accused without security or oversight, this change will make it clear they are being released on Unsecured Judicial Release.
- Public Safety is paramount in our state. When a defendant is charged with high level crimes, it is imperative that if they are to be released, there is adequate security and is in the best interest of public safety. By clarifying there are specific crimes that do not qualify for Unsecured Judicial Release, the state is ensuring that potential murderers, rapists, and child abusers are not being released without some assurance of accountability for their return to court. In many instances, it is imperative they stay in jail pending trial which the court has discretion in capital offenses.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Stephen Owens*  
Stephen Owens