

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
From: Michelle McCormick, Executive Director, KCSDV
Re: Neutral Written-Only Testimony for SB 204
Date: February 17, 2025

Chairperson Warren and Members of the Committee:

The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) is a nonprofit organization located in Topeka, with 25 member organizations who provide direct services to victims of sexual and domestic violence in all 105 Kansas counties. I am here today representing our Coalition and these programs, who provide critical, lifesaving services to Kansans. Services include emergency shelter, emergency helplines, counseling and support groups, accompanying victims to medical, court, and law enforcement appointments, and other supportive services. These services are provided to victims and survivors 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Kansas domestic and sexual violence programs serve on average more than 60,000 Kansans each year. And according to research, that is likely only 40% of those who could use the services, due to the barriers to getting assistance.

What may be lesser known is that KCSDV provides annual training for victim advocates and allied professionals (law enforcement, healthcare, social services etc.) so they can be competent in responding to these complex issues. We trained over 4000 professionals last year. KCSDV also provides expert consultation on the issues of sexual and domestic violence and does so through an average of 1500 contacts for technical assistance each year. In addition, KCSDV collaborates to center the needs of victims and survivors in public policy initiatives through our work with state-level committees, such as co-chairing with the KBI the Kansas Sexual Assault Response Advisory Committee. And we perform the accreditation of the 25 direct service organizations, to ensure that high-quality services are provided consistently throughout the state.

KCSDV offers neutral testimony for SB 204, a bill that would require the case and warrant information to be sealed in criminal and juvenile offender cases.

We are specifically concerned about any identifying information being released about victims and survivors in criminal cases. We have recently been made aware of issues with victims' identifying information including names and home addresses being publicly available on the court case management system. Public availability of this information is incredibly dangerous for victims who are being asked to participate in criminal cases against their perpetrator.

Safety and personal autonomy for victims is of utmost importance, and KCSDV respectfully requests the Committee makes sure SB 204 will fix any loopholes currently in the court case management system.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michelle McCormick". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michelle" and last name "McCormick" clearly legible.

Michelle McCormick, LMSW
Executive Director
Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence