



Kansas County & District Attorneys Association

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March 10, 2025

Senate Judiciary Committee
Attention: Chair Kellie Warren
State Capitol, Room 346-S
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Re: Senate Bill 288

Chair Kellie Warren and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our written response in support of SB288.

The Kansas Legislature has made repeated attempts to protect children and the general public from sex offenders. The Kansas offender Registration Act found at K.S.A. 22-4901 and 22-4902 are some of those efforts. A recent incident in my jurisdiction has highlighted the need to provide further clarity to the intent of this Legislature, which is to keep sex offenders out of our schools and their various activities. The additional language in this bill will provide guidance to school boards, school administrators, law enforcement and prosecutors, who are charged with enforcing these laws.

Our association supports these efforts because all the research demonstrates that sex offenders, especially those who target young children have very high recidivism rates. I worked on the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative in Kansas (SAKI) project, which eliminated the backlog of untested sexual assault kits in Kansas. As we began to identify these individuals, we also began to compile their criminal history to determine their likelihood of reoffending. The offenders identified during the testing of these kits had left a swath of damage across their communities. The data showed that 42% of these offenders committed other sex offenses. 93% of them committed other crimes. In 2018 the Department of Justice outlined the recidivism rates of sex offenders. This data showed that 35 – 40 % of convicted sex offenders committed new sex offenses or other violent crimes. Child victim cases showed the highest propensity to reoffend.

The sex offender registry for offenses involving children contains some of the most serious criminal offenses under our current sentencing guidelines. This bill will provide additional guidance to school administrators and provide clarity to law enforcement and prosecutors. This will allow us to hold offenders who violate this law accountable. It will help protect the people of Kansas from these dangerous predatory offenders and enhance the public safety of our fellow Kansans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephen M. Howe", with a stylized, flowing script.

Stephen M. Howe
Johnson County District Attorney