



March 11, 2025

To: Madam Chair Warren and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary
From: Kasey Dalke, Executive Director of Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas
Re: Proponent Testimony for S.B 288

Madam Chair Warren and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary.

My name is Kasey Dalke, and I serve as the Executive Director of Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas (CAACKS), a statewide membership association representing 18 accredited Child Advocacy Centers (CACs) across Kansas. Our mission is to ensure a coordinated, trauma-informed response to child abuse investigations, providing direct support to thousands of children and their families every year.

I come before you today in strong support of Senate Bill No. 288, which seeks to prohibit adult sex offenders, whose crimes involved a child victim, from entering school property or attending school activities. This legislation is a critical step forward in protecting Kansas children from further harm, aligning with evidence-based research on child safety, recidivism prevention, and the impact of trauma.

Why This Bill Matters

1. Children Should Feel Safe at School

Schools are trusted environments where children should feel protected. Research shows that children who have experienced sexual abuse often suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and anxiety, especially when confronted with reminders of their abuse (Finkelhor, 2020; CDC, 2023).

Encounters with a past abuser can trigger severe psychological distress, worsening educational outcomes and behavioral health (U.S. Department of Justice, 2021). Children who feel unsafe at school are more likely to struggle academically, develop behavioral issues, and disengage from their education. This bill helps ensure that children are not forced to confront their abuser in a setting meant to be a place of safety and learning.

2. Preventing Recidivism & Protecting Communities

Research consistently shows that individuals convicted of sexual offenses against minors have a heightened risk of recidivism, particularly when placed in high-risk settings with access to children (Hanson et al., 2018; National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, 2022).



A 2017 study by the U.S. Department of Justice found that offenders who committed sex crimes against children had an average recidivism rate of 23% over a 15-year period, with the highest risk occurring when offenders were in environments where they could re-establish contact with minors (Hanson & Morton-Bourgon, 2017).

Additionally, offenders who had a previous connection to their victims—such as family friends, teachers, or coaches—were significantly more likely to reoffend if allowed unsupervised access to schools or community events (Seto et al., 2020).

By restricting these individuals from school campuses and activities, SB 288 significantly lowers the risk of repeat offenses and strengthens Kansas' public safety efforts.

3. Strengthening Law Enforcement and School Safety Measures

This bill also supports law enforcement, school officials, and child protection professionals by providing clear legal authority to prohibit sex offenders from accessing school environments.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2023), schools with clear, enforceable policies on restricting access for registered sex offenders experience fewer incidents of sexual misconduct compared to those without such measures.

Furthermore, research shows that schools lacking clear legal guidelines place an undue burden on administrators and school resource officers, forcing them to navigate complex legal and disciplinary challenges without the necessary tools to remove threats (National School Safety Center, 2022).

By codifying these protections into law, SB 288 ensures that Kansas school districts have a uniform, enforceable policy, reducing ambiguity and strengthening child safety measures statewide.

Conclusion

Senate Bill 288 is a necessary, evidence-based step toward ensuring Kansas children are protected from known threats in school environments.

- Creates safer schools by ensuring victims do not encounter their abusers in an educational setting.
- Reduces the risk of re-offense by preventing known offenders from accessing vulnerable children.
- Gives schools and law enforcement clear legal authority to enforce restrictions and remove threats quickly.
- Aligns with national best practices for crime prevention and trauma-informed child protection.



I urge this committee to pass SB 288 with consideration of the proposed clarifications, ensuring a balanced approach that prioritizes child safety while providing necessary legal clarity. CACKS would be happy to work with other proponents of this bill as needed.

Thank you for your time and for your dedication to protecting Kansas children.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kasey Dalke", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

Kasey L. Dalke
Executive Director
Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas

References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2023). **Adverse Childhood Experiences & Long-Term Outcomes**. Retrieved from: www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces
2. Finkelhor, D. (2020). **Child Sexual Abuse: Facts, Trends, and Policy Implications**. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 19(3), 679-704.
3. Hanson, R. K., & Morton-Bourgon, K. (2017). **Predicting Recidivism Among Sex Offenders**. *U.S. Department of Justice Report*.
4. National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. (2022). **Child Exploitation and Repeat Offender Risks**. Retrieved from: www.missingkids.org
5. National School Safety Center. (2022). **Best Practices for Managing Sex Offender School Restrictions**.
6. Seto, M. C., Babchishin, K. M., & Lalumiere, M. L. (2020). **Recidivism and Sexual Grooming Patterns in Offenders**. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 26(2), 150-165.