

March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Senate Committee on Judiciary  
State Capitol  
300 SW 10<sup>th</sup> Street  
Topeka, KS 66612

**Re: Health Forward Foundation opposition to HB 2378 – the removal of squatters act.**

Chair Warren and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Health Forward Foundation (Health Forward), I submit this written-only testimony in opposition of HB 2378. Health Forward works to support and build inclusive, powerful, and healthy communities characterized by economically just systems. We oppose this legislation as eviction proceedings in Kansas already heavily favor landlords and this would remove due process from tenants facing eviction.

HB 2378 creates a loophole for property owners to exploit to hastily remove a tenant. It would abrogate the need for regular eviction proceedings – already provided for under Kansas law – and instead allow the property owner to petition the sheriff's office to do so, only needing verification that they own the property. Despite this bill having some recourse for tenants wrongfully evicted, we know that there is a significant imbalance on representation for eviction-related proceedings, with tenants having legal representation [only about 4% of the time](#), while landlords have representation over 80%. Unless this bill is amended to include a right to counsel provision for tenants, this pattern will continue.

Evictions are a difficult thing, and they are especially challenging in rural areas. About [220,000 evictions](#) are filed each year in rural counties. The [research available](#) also links evictions to a host of bad outcomes – decreased earnings, increased homelessness, and worse health outcomes than those who are not evicted. A bill like this would increase homelessness for those evicted and thus continue this cycle.

Health Forward asks legislators on this committee to vote no on HB 2378 as it would lead to more evictions and disruptions to people's lives without solving the underlying issue of a lack of housing options. Please feel free to reach out to me at [nmadden@healthforward.org](mailto:nmadden@healthforward.org) if you have any questions or requests for additional information.

Respectfully,

Nathan J. Madden, Ph.D.  
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Health Forward Foundation