



Advocacy | KS Senate Bill 116
Mark Zimmerman | 3.17.2025

Good morning, Chairperson and members of the committee -

My name is Mark Zimmerman. I am the executive director at Miracle of Innocence based in Overland Park, KS. We are an innocence organization founded by Lamonte McIntyre and Darryl Burton who are both Exonerees of crimes they did not commit. We work to free the innocent and provide support when they come home.

I am here today to express my strong support for Senate Bill 116, the Pete Coones Memorial Act.

This bill is a critical step toward ensuring fairness and transparency in our criminal legal system. Jailhouse informant testimony is one of the leading causes of wrongful convictions, often incentivized by undisclosed deals and benefits. Senate Bill 116 would bring much-needed accountability by requiring prosecutors to disclose their intent to use jailhouse witnesses and track their history of testimony and any benefits received.

The tragic case of Pete Coones, who was wrongfully convicted based on false jailhouse informant testimony, reminds us of the devastating consequences when safeguards are lacking. Pete lost over a decade of his life, and while he was eventually exonerated, justice came too late. This bill will help prevent future injustices by ensuring full disclosure and transparency when jailhouse informants are used.

I urge this committee to pass Senate Bill 116 to strengthen due process, protect the integrity of our justice system, and honor the legacy of Pete Coones. Thank you for your time.