

Kathleen Cashman
Proponent Testimony for SB 358
to the Kansas Senate Judiciary Committee
February 4, 2026

In-Person Testimony

My name is **Kathleen Cashman**. I am a survivor of sexual violence, connected to the Clark Petersen case. I am testifying in support of Senate **Bill 358**.

SB 358 addresses a lack in existing law. That Clark Petersen was allowed to return home, unencumbered, after the jury found him guilty of 51 felony counts of sexual violation, was shocking and extremely disturbing. Risk of flight was beyond the point.

Showing up for trial when innocent until proven guilty and receiving 51 guilty verdicts and facing the strong possibility of spending the rest of his life in prison is a perfect example of comparing apples to oranges.

Sitting in the courtroom with many of the 19 women was emotionally charged— until we started hearing guilty verdict after guilty verdict, we did not know if we had been heard and believed. When Judge Bannister allowed the defendant to go home, I realized that even though there were 51 guilty verdicts, there was no understanding of the injury and trauma inflicted on the women who had lived through it, and relived it repeatedly preparing for trial, and yet again on the witness stand.

This bill prevents this from happening to other survivors. Anyone found guilty of violent crime should lose their right to freedom immediately.

This bill is the result of the determination of the 19 women who pressed charges to make real and effective change. We have found support from each other, our community, our elected officials and our legislators.

I respectfully urge this committee to support Senate Bill 358.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Cashman
Manhattan, Kansas Resident