

Rev. Dr. Bobby Love, Sr.
Testimony Supporting HB2544
House Judiciary Hearing
February 6, 2020 3:30 p.m.
Kansas State Capitol Room 346-S

Good afternoon, representatives. My name is Rev. Dr. Bobby Love, Sr. I am the chairman of the Kansas African American Affairs Commission, co-chair of Kansas More Squared clergy, and pastor of the historic Second Baptist Church of Olathe. I testify today in favor of passing this bill.

As a commissioner for KAAAC, I know the pressing need for greater racial equity in our criminal justice system. According to the last census, black Kansans are almost 8 times more likely to be incarcerated than our white neighbors. This is an injustice, which must be corrected. Part of correcting it requires greater honesty and transparency in our courts.

As a leader of More squared, I know the need for greater equity in our criminal justice system is not rooted in political beliefs, but in my Christian values of justice, truth, and mercy. Creating greater transparency in the state's use of jailhouse witnesses will build a system that more greatly embodies these values.

As a pastor, I have ministered to Kansans from every walk of life. Regardless of age, regardless of wealth, and regardless of interactions with our criminal justice system. I've witnessed firsthand how the inequities of our present system can wreak havoc in the lives of not only those caught up in the criminal justice system, but their families as well. We have a moral responsibility to ensure the trials that destabilize families are grounded in truth.

As a father, I know the ache of hoping your children will be treated with fairness and respect. None of us would want those we love to be accused and caught up in something without the opportunity to evaluate whether that testimony was honest and trustworthy.

Thank you for your time and attention. I hope that soon, we can celebrate the passage of these common-sense reforms, which can benefit all Kansans by ensuring the use of jailhouse witnesses is done responsibly and ethically. Thank you and God bless.