



## Justice Center

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

March 22, 2021

Testimony Regarding HB 2121

Submitted by Jennifer Kisela, Deputy Program Director, The Council of State Governments Justice Center

Thank you to the Chair and members of the Committee for the opportunity to address HB 2121. I hope to provide useful information and context for the bill.

Kansas does not currently have a statutory definition for when a person on supervision “absconds from supervision.” Additionally, Kansas has multiple entities that provide supervision: Court Services, Community Corrections, and the Kansas Department of Corrections. As a result, each supervision entity can decide for itself what constitutes “absconding from supervision.”

Analysis by The Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center found that in Kansas,

- 58 percent of prison admissions in fiscal year (FY) 2019 were for supervision violations;
- Approximately 20–25 percent of the community corrections population is on absconder status; and
- In FY2019, 92 percent of revocations for women were due to condition violations, compared to 85 percent for men.

The Criminal Justice Reform Commission identified multiple targeted approaches to reduce revocations in a way that would improve success for people on supervision and maintain public safety. The targeted approaches include the following:

1. Ensuring that robust sanctions and incentives are available to respond to behaviors on supervision
2. Increasing access to programming by developing a statewide coordinated effort to allow people supervised by one agency to receive programming facilitated by another agency
3. Piloting an interagency re-engagement unit that targets people who fail to report, are on absconder status, or are at risk of revocation to connect them to resources and successfully re-engage them in supervision

House Bill (HB) 2121 will provide clarification and consistency for supervision entities, the courts, and the prisoner review board regarding absconder status. In addition, HB 2121 will provide guidance for the interagency re-engagement unit pilot.



I hope the Committee will favorably consider HB 2121, which represents a continued commitment to improve the supervision system using data-driven collaborative policymaking.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer A. Kisela".

Jennifer Kisela, Deputy Program Director, the CSG Justice Center