

**State of Kansas
House of Representatives**

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Gail A. Finney
Representatives, 84th District

Support Testimony for HB 2147

February 19, 2015

Chairman Barker and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

On behalf of the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence and the Wichita Area Sexual Assault Center, I introduced HB 2147 which will incorporate protections for sexual assault victims into the existing Protection from Abuse Act (PFAA) and the Protection from Stalking Act (PFSA). It creates the "Protection from Stalking and Sexual Assault Act." Also, it authorizes the court to issue an order that requires the assailant to keep away from the sexual assault victim and it provides victims of sexual violence with a civil remedy requiring the offender to stay away from the victim.

Sexual violence degrades, humiliates and terrorizes its victims. These victims need safety and protection – just as domestic violence and stalking victims. Victims of sexual assault are often placed in difficult, fearful and potentially dangerous circumstances if their assailant remains in or returns to the community. These victims should be offered the same measure of protection already in existence for domestic violence and stalking victims.

According to the most recent National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (2010) nearly 1 in 5 women (18.3%) and 1 in 71 men (1.4%) in the United States have been raped at some time in their lives. Yet, only 28% of them report the sexual assault to law enforcement and only one quarter of those reported are ever prosecuted, leaving victims traumatized and fearful. Victims of sexual assault need these civil orders of protection to help keep them safe from perpetrators. In addition, there are 27 states including the District of Columbia that have already passed law providing protection orders for sexual assault victims.

I respectfully ask that you help close this loophole in our current protection orders that has prevented many victims of sexual violence in Kansas from receiving any type of protection order. And, thank you in advance for your strong consideration of this bill today.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gail A. Finney".

Rep. Gail A. Finney