KANSAS JUSTICE ADVOCATE

Mary Dean
President Kansas Justice Advocate
(316) 371-2253

Senator Jeff King
Senate Judiciary Committee
Statehouse Topeka, KS
(785) 296-6817

March 17, 2015

Dear Senator King:

I am writing this letter in support of Senator Oletha Faust-Goudeau's Senate Bill number 204. It is important that the biological parents, grandparents, or relatives of a child or children who have been removed from their home, be given the opportunity to stay connected to their families with scheduled visitations until they can be reintegrated back home. As an advocate for children and families in Wichita, I have seen the pain that mothers, fathers, and grandparents are enduring because the system (DCF, the DA, the Courts, St. Francis Community Services, Youthville, DCCCA, or TFI) have told them that they are not entitled to scheduled visits,. And when parents, grandparents finally do get to visit, 9 times out of 10 the visits are interrupted because a case manager or social worker will use retaliation against them because they may have be a little late for the visits due to the fact that a lot of the parents and/or grandparents are hindered with no reliable transportation.

I support Senate Bill number 204, because it would protect the rights of the child and a person who has been granted visitation rights where they would be entitled to the total amount of time granted for their visits. And, even if they are late the allotted time granted to them for visits would not be deducted from their time. This bill is so important to children and families who are caught up in a system a lot of times that has not been very kind and/or understanding to their situation when it comes to staying connected to their children.

I truly hope that the Judiciary Committee will give a lot of consideration in passing this bill which would be in the best interest of the children in the great State of Kansas.

Sincerely,

Mary Dean

President of Kansas Justice Advocate, Inc.

"The scales of justice should be equal for everyone"