

MINUTES OF THE HOUSE SOCIAL SERVICES BUDGET COMMITTEE

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bob Bethell at 3:30 p.m. on March 18, 2008, in Room 514-S of the Capitol.

All members were present.

Committee staff present:

Amy Deckard, Kansas Legislative Research Department  
Nobuko Folmsbee, Office of Revisor of Statutes  
Judy Holliday, Committee Assistant

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative Oletha Faust-Goudeau, Wichita  
Representative Anthony Brown  
Ron Nichols, Director of Training, National Center for Fathering  
Amos Johnson III, Director Educational Programs, National Center for Fathering  
Candy Shively, Deputy Secretary, Kansas Department Social and Rehabilitation Services  
William DaVitt, Wichita  
Richard Morrissey, Interim Director, Division of Health, Kansas Department of Health and Environment  
Mary Blubaugh, Executive Administrator, Kansas Board of Nursing

Written testimony received:

Don Youts, Wichita, KS  
Pastor William Vann, Wichita, KS  
Norman Williams, Chief of Police for the City of Wichita, KS  
Brandon Decker, Park City, Kansas

Chairman Bethell brought before the Committee a draft of **Substitute for HB 2752—An act enacting the geriatric mental health act; establishing a geriatric mental health program administered by the department on aging.**

Representative George moved to accept **Substitute for HB 2752** as drafted, seconded by Representative Ballard.

Chairman Bethell asked the Revisors Office to explain the substitute bill. The only change from the original bill would be identifying who would administer the program, which would be the Department of Aging.

Representative George moved to pass **Substitute for HB 2752** favorably, seconded by Representative Ballard. The motion carried.

**Hearing on HB 2965—Fatherhood initiative program; implemented by the department of social and rehabilitation services**

Chairman Bethell asked staff from the Revisors Office to explain the intent of the bill and the fiscal impact.

Representative Oletha Faust-Goudeau, Wichita, testified in support of **HB 2965**. (Attachment 1) Representative Faust-Goudeau introduced the bill at the request of a concerned citizen in her district and to embrace the concept of the Fatherhood Initiative program as a model for young men. She testified that the program would provide direction to young fatherless teens and offering to young fathers valuable educational tools to become accountable and responsible tax-paying citizens, and to value life.

Representative Anthony Brown testified as a proponent of **HB 2965**. (Attachment 2) Representative Brown stated that the main effort to collect child support is to get more money for children from delinquent parents, but a side benefit is that parents who are current on child support are more active in a child's life. Many times, young men do not know the proper fatherhood role in the family, and this legislation along with faith based groups can mentor young fathers into positive influences on their children.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Social Services Budget Committee at 3:30 p.m. on March 18, 2008, in Room 514-S of the Capitol.

Ron Nichols, Director of Training, National Center for Fathering, testified as a proponent of **HB 2965**. (Attachment 3) Mr. Nichols told the Committee that children of fatherless families are more likely to experience poverty, be incarcerated, do poorly in school, experience more emotional and behavioral problems, and be irresponsible as parents. He spoke of a father training class instituted five years ago, conducted by the Intensive Supervision Officer of the 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Community Corrections Department for men in intensive probation and considered high risk by the courts. The result of these classes is that 70 percent or more of these men never go to prison, and that after seeing generations of families in their courtrooms judges refer men to the program because they recognize the need to change those destructive patterns in families.

Amos Johnson III, Director Educational Programs, National Center for Fathering, testified as a proponent of **HB 2965**. (Attachment 4) Mr. Johnson expressed the belief that every Kansas child needs a father or father figure they can count on, and every Kansas father needs a support system to fulfill his fathering role. In partnering with social service agencies, there is great social and economic value of father involvement in the lives of children.

A Fathering Court was established in Missouri to provide an alternative to incarceration for men in arrears with child support. In ten years, over \$2 million in child support was collected, and the incarceration costs saved totaled \$4.3 million.

Candy Shively, Deputy Secretary of Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services (SRS), testified as a proponent of **HB 2965**. (Attachment 5) Ms. Shively stated that SRS already attempts to establish and maintain fatherhood relationships. However, with funding from this bill, early paternity could be established by expanding the existing program for in-hospital paternity acknowledgment. Additional funding would provide a second annual fatherhood summit, expanding parental education and allowing more individuals to participate.

William Davitt, Wichita, testified as a proponent of **HB 2965**. (Attachment 6) Mr. Davitt cited numerous statistics regarding births outside of marriage, and stated that getting fathers back in the family through a statewide fatherhood program will cost little compared to the millions now spent for social workers and prisons. He further stated that by getting fathers back in the family so they can teach and guide their children away from drugs, crime and gangs, we would be cutting off at the source the flood of young people pouring into our jails and prisons.

The following written only testimony was submitted:

Don Youts, Wichita (Attachment 7)

Pastor William Vann, Wichita (Attachment 8)

Norman Williams, Chief of Police for the City of Wichita (Attachment 9)

Brandon Decker, Park City, Kansas (Attachment 10)

The hearing on **HB 2965** was closed.

Discussions began on **HB 2671--Board of nursing to oversee nurse and medication aides**. The Revisors Office was asked to explain the changes to the bill.

There was discussion on who initiated the bill and if the Board of Nursing and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) were in agreement. Chairman Bethell called on Mary Blubaugh, Executive Administrator, Board of Nursing, to clarify the Board's position. Ms. Blubaugh reminded the Committee that the bill was introduced four years ago and died in committee. Ms. Blubaugh told the Committee that the Board of Nursing is supported by fees, and the fees collected by KDHE would fund the Board of Nursing's administration of the program. Ms. Blubaugh reiterated that the Board of Nursing is changing software and wants to know before changing it if the bill will pass. The fiscal note to the bill provides that the money taken from KDHE would go to the Board of Nursing.

Representative Mast moved to pass favorably **HB 2671 as amended**, seconded by Representative George. Additional discussion ensued.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House Social Services Budget Committee at 3:30 p.m. on March 18, 2008, in Room 514-S of the Capitol.

Chairman Bethell called on Richard Morrissey, Interim Director, Division of Health, Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), to explain the software database currently administered by the KDHE. Mr. Morrissey stated that the transition from the KDHE to the Board of Nursing would have undetermined front-end costs. He told the Committee that the background checks and fees collected for them would remain with KDHE.

The Committee asked about the delay until 2009 for the Board of Nursing's installation of their software. Ms. Blubaugh responded that they needed to have a smooth transition and needs that time span to complete.

Chairman Bethell brought before the Committee a substitute motion to amend **HB 2671**. The amendment would restore wording on pages 8 and 15.

Representative Mast moved to pass favorably **Substitute for HB 2671** as amended, seconded by Representative George. The motion carried.

The Committee made the recommendation that the language from **Substitute for HB 2671** be inserted into **Sub for SB 309** and that it be passed favorably.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

STATE OF KANSAS

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(SESSION ONLY)

March 18, 2008



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
MEMBER: ENERGY AND UTILITIES  
FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS  
INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS  
JOINT COMMITTEE ON ARTS AND  
CULTURAL RESOURCES

Proponent of House Bill 2965: Testimony before the House Social Services Budget Committee by Rep. Oletha Faust-Goudeau

Dear Mr. Chairman Bethell and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to speak in support of House Bill 2965, the Fatherhood Initiative Program.

This bill introduction was made at the request of a concerned citizen Mr. William Davitt on behalf of the family of Robert Ridge a 19-year-old young man with a bright future ahead of him was unnecessarily killed by two other young men ages 18 and 23 simply because they felt Robert looked at them the wrong way. Please refer to the article dated January 9.

After reading the article in the Wichita Eagle and talking with family members and having the desire to address the need of my constituent, I was compelled to embrace the concept of the Fatherhood Program with the hope of providing a brighter future for all young men. Mr. Chairman, I feel that House Bill 2965 will address a list of social problems. It would also provide direction to young fatherless teens and fathers offering valuable educational tools to become accountable and responsible tax-paying citizens while providing a purpose to value another human beings life.

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members, this bill will not solve every problem regarding our misguided youth, but it makes a good faith effort. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. I respectfully urge your support for the passage of House Bill 2965, I will stand for questions.

Rep. Oletha Faust-Goudeau  
84<sup>th</sup> District

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March 18, 2008  
Attachment 1*

STATE OF KANSAS

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TOPEKA

HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

## HB 2965

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

VICE CHAIR: FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS  
MEMBER: FEDERAL AND STATE AFFAIRS  
TAXATION

Thank you Chairman Bethell and honorable members of the committee for allowing me the brief time today to testify in favor of HB 2965. Many of you well know that I am strong proponent of measures that benefit child support in the state. Yes, the main effort is collect more money for children from delinquent parents, but in addition to the monetary factor, we know that parents (fathers more so than mothers) are more active in a child's life if the parent is current on child support. This is where I think Child Support legislation an HB 2965 converge. It is my understanding in talking with folks in family support services that many times young men do not know what a proper fatherhood role is in the family.

I truly believe HB 2965 will advance the effort to make better fathers out of young men that our state and our nation desperately needs, particularly at this time. We know for a fact that young ladies are more likely to become pregnant in high school with the absence of the father. We also know for a fact that children male or female are more likely to become involved in drugs and alcohol at an earlier age with a dysfunctional dad.

It is my hope that this legislation along with faith based groups can properly mentor young fathers into positive influences on their children. I think we have a responsibility to what we can where we can to promote a stronger family unit.

I urge you to support this legislation and make families stronger for Kansas.

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Attachment 2*

**Testimony on HB 2965**  
**Before the Social Services Budget Committee**  
**March 18, 2008**  
**Ron Nichols, Director of Training, National Center for Fathering**

Why bring dads into the picture?

Dad's involvement makes a difference on a national and a local basis. Nationally, children from fatherless families are: more likely to experience poverty, be incarcerated, do more poorly in school, experience more emotional and behavioral problems, and be irresponsible as parents.

Let me talk about an example of an effort to change this trend in our state. This morning I received evaluations from a father training class of 13 men in Emporia. It is an example of classes that have been going on for 5 years there. These evaluations are remarkable, as the men in class are in an intensive probation program for felony charges, many having to do with family disputes, neglect, divorce, assault, DUI, with bitter custody issues for their children. They are considered high risk by the courts.

The Intensive Supervision Officer of the 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Community Corrections department conducts the training, (along with his agency director) because "it makes a profound difference." In his words "you see these big stoic guys really moved." In the words of the men in the classes when asked what will you do as a result of this class... *"Do what I can to keep in my son's life. Make sure to work things out with his mother to give my son two parents"* *"I will make a point to spend time with each of my children doing what they want to do instead of what I want to do or think what would be fun."* *"love my kids unconditionally."* *I will try to mend mine and my daughter's relationship. And try to be more aware of her problems and her likes and dislikes."* *"I will think about what I am doing with my son all the time and how it affects him."* *"...I will try to always be there for my kid."*

The Intensive Supervision Officer estimates that 70% or more of these men do not go to prison. He feels strongly that men who attend the program have reduced risk due to the behaviors he observes over the 12 to 24 months of contact he has with these men... behaviors like spending leisure time with family activities, taking kids to sports practices, being motivated to be

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*Attachment 3-1*

actively involved in family life rather than just sitting in front of a TV. He also mentioned that judges refer men to the program because they have seen generations of families in their courtrooms and recognize the need to change those destructive patterns in families.

How do you establish effective father training in local areas across a state? Local men are equipped in a train-the trainer program designed to give these men the content and process to impact fathers. Five years ago, men from the Emporia area were trained as instructors in fathering programs by the National Center for Fathering. That training and materials were paid for by SRS. The manpower, facility and donuts are and continue to be, paid for by the 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Community Corrections. In the words of the Officer, "this is an example of collaboration that has had a profound effect." Referrals of men who would benefit from the program come from community family preservation agencies and local judges. To date, over 120 men have been through the training in this community. The impact on their children will be significant, as the judges have indicated in their observations about the generations they see in their courtrooms.

This is just one example of the effectiveness of father training through social services collaborations in a community where funding and commitment are present.

## Testimony on HB 2965

**Amos Johnson III, Director Educational Programs  
National Center for Fathering  
March 18, 2008**

As the director of educational programs for fathers at the National Center for Fathering, I am here to support House Bill No. 2965.

We believe every Kansas child needs a father or father figure they can count on and every Kansas father needs a fathering specific support system to fulfill his fathering role.

Our experience of partnership with social service agencies for the training of fathers attests to the social and economic value of father involvement in the lives of children to the broader community.

In Jackson County, Missouri, Fathering Court was established in an effort to provide an alternative to incarceration for men in arrears with child support. Since its inception in March of 1998, the Jackson County Fathering Court has collected \$2,766,000 in child support. The incarceration costs that have been saved total \$4,290,000, leaving a total financial impact of \$7,056,000.

I would like to take a few moments to share the breakthroughs that are achieved as a result of father training - these are comment from men participating in Fathering Court:

1) My dad died when I was 8 from a boating accident. I was one of 16 kids he and my mother had, and when he died there were still 10 kids living at home. Writing this dear dad letter was really good for me emotionally and it makes me want to as we talked about in class be more emotionally present for my kids and it makes me realize that my kids don't really know about their granddaddy because I never talk to them about even the little bit that I remember about him. My father shaped me and my brothers and sisters and now I see even more how I'm shaping my kids or not shaping them.

2) My dad just wasn't there. I just needed his time, just some of it then maybe I wouldn't have made stupid mistakes like with my credit you know?

3) When I look at the picture here of the cost of a real family I see my child getting caught in the crossfire between me and her mama, but I also see that she can't go higher because we're not under her supporting her as a foundation for her to go higher and stay higher.

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4) That part on relationships we discussed, that right there is exactly what men and women are and do in a relationship, we put each other down, accuse each other of stuff right or wrong, and I definitely withdraw after a while, but now I'll work to have a respectable relationship because it benefits my child.

The National Center for Fathering advocates for the passing of House Bill No. 2965. This bill will enable fathering advocates to build up men so they can experience breakthrough as a Kansas father for Kansas children.

Kansas Department of  
Social and Rehabilitation Services  
Don Jordan, Secretary

House Social Services Budget Committee  
March 18, 2008

HB 2965 - Fatherhood Initiative

Integrated Services Delivery  
Candy Shively, Deputy Secretary



For Additional Information Contact:  
Dustin Hardison, Director of Public Policy  
Docking State Office Building, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor North  
(785) 296-3271

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March 18, 2008  
Attachment 5-1*

## Fatherhood Initiative

### House Social Services Budget Committee March 18, 2008

Chairman Bethell and members of the committee, I am Candy Shively, Deputy Secretary of SRS. Thank you for the opportunity to provide information on House Bill 2965. This bill would direct SRS to establish a fatherhood initiative program, subject to appropriations, to encourage the formation and continuation of relationships between children and their fathers.

SRS attempts to establish and maintain fatherhood relationships today. The underlying goal of Child Support Enforcement is not just to collect resources for children, but to also connect absent parents, who typically are fathers, with their children so that relationships can develop.

One example of what SRS could do with funding from this bill is to promote early paternity establishment by expanding the existing program for in-hospital paternity acknowledgement, which is a collaborative effort between SRS and the Department of Health and Environment. The expansion would require an automated interface between the two agencies for the timely receipt of data. A digital, ongoing educational program for key hospital personnel handling in-hospital paternity acknowledgements would also be needed due to the high turn-over rate for these positions.

Currently, one fatherhood summit occurs annually in Kansas, providing a forum for parental education and networking and furnishing tools and information on how to build community fatherhood programs. Additional funding would allow a second summit each year to allow more individuals and organizations to participate.

If this bill is passed, SRS will work with communities and stakeholders to design fatherhood programs to meet their needs.

This concludes my testimony and I would be glad to answer any questions the committee may have.

IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL NO. 28<sup>8</sup>77

Testimony of William T. Davitt, volunteer private citizen, 1205 Bitting, Wichita, Kansas 67203. Phone 316 263-9850. Before Social Services Budget Committee in Kansas State Capitol Room 514-S at 3:30 P.M. on March 13, 2008.

1. Bill Cosby says 70 percent of black babies and 37 percent of white babies are being born in America outside of marriage. Most grow up without a father in the family.

2. An army of social workers rush in to provide mother and baby with everything they need costing taxpayers millions of dollars.

3. National Fatherhood Initiative states that 70 percent of all long term hard core inmates grew up without a dad. U.S.A. Today reported that building new prisons is the largest growth industry in America costing taxpayers millions of dollars.

4. Most young people who go into drugs, crime, gangs come from broken homes, growing up without a father in the family, costing taxpayers millions of dollars.

5. We must get fathers back in the family. And we can do this with a STATE WIDE FATHERHOOD PROMOTION CAMPAIGN provided for in House Bill No. 2887. It will cost less than peanuts compared with the millions of tax dollars now going for social workers and prisons.

6. If you know a better way to get fathers back in the family as Almighty God intended . . . . please tell me what that better way would be.

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Attachment 6-1*

7. Wichita police have declared that when gang members are locked up in prison their place in gangs is quickly taken by other young people attracted by big money from drugs and prostitution.

8. A few years ago Sedgwick County built a new jail. Now they are building another new jail which will be too small before it is completed and open for business.

9. We must CUT OFF AT THE SOURCE the flood of young people pouring into our jails and prisons. We can do this by getting fathers back in the family so they can teach and guide their children not to go into drugs, crime and gangs.

10. **SRS WILL NOT START FROM SCRATCH**

To implement this bill there is no need for an enormous number of government workers. On the computer at [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org) the National Fatherhood Initiative has available all kinds of research, printed materials and fatherhood promotion campaigns all ready prepared to be carried out by the state, city, county, church, school, labor, chamber of commerce and many other groups.

11. SRS can save time and learn from a long list of other states that have fatherhood promotion programs such as Louisiana, Connecticut, Hawaii after which this House Bill No. 28<sup>8</sup>77 is modeled.

12. This bill should declare that it is the intention of the legislature for SRS to follow plans set out above within a certain budget established by the legislature.

**CONCLUSION**

If tax haters kill this bill, which is very likely, they will be forcing taxpayers to go on paying millions and millions of tax dollars for social workers and prisons . . .  
. . . **WITH NO RELIEF IN SIGHT.**

Thanking you, I remain very sincerely and respectfully.

*William T. Davitt*

William T. Davitt

March 14, 2008

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

One of the factors used in the state of Illinois to predict the number of prison beds needed in 18 years is the illiteracy rate in the third grade. Research has shown that fathers reading to their preschool children develop the emergent literacy skills necessary for academic success. This research show that if we want to decrease our prison population, we should encourage fathers to read to their children.

In fact, research increasingly documents the impact of failed fatherhood on virtually every social issue in our communities. From prenatal care and low birth weight to lifetime income, fathers are identified as one of the most critical factors for both positive and negative outcomes. The absence/presence of father-care is more important in predicting a child's success than economic status, social class, gender, or birth order. According to Dr. Kyle Pruett (FatherNeed, Random House, 2001), father-care reduces

- teen pregnancy (75% less likely),
- incarceration (80% less likely),
- child abuse (50% less likely),
- illegal drug use (50% less likely).

For daughters, father-care is the single greatest influence in delaying puberty and the absence of father-care is tied to higher incidence of breast cancer, unhealthy weight gain, alcohol consumption, and sexual promiscuity (Dr. Bruce Ellis, "Daddy's Girl," Report Newsmagazine, 2002, p46).

The list of social problems related to this one factor – father-care – is far too lengthy to enumerate. However, our system of social services is a gender biased industry and rarely recognizes fathers as primary clients. Attempting to remedy our social ills by focusing on the behaviors of women and children cannot successfully treat the causes.

The Male Focus Coalition in Wichita consists of 18 partner non-profit and faith-based agencies who have worked with minimal funding over the last 11 years to serve men and fathers in our community. We enthusiastically support this bill which would help develop meaningful and lasting activities for fathers. The Fatherhood Initiative should target services and activities that will impact a father's involvement with his family and his community. Although men may have great diversity in culture, education, occupation, and personal preferences, the role of fatherhood holds a common bond for

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Attachment 7-1 Testimony of Don You's*

all males, whether as actual dads or as father figures to the children around us. When we support fathers we support children, families, and community.



Representative Faust-Goudeau,

This is what I presented at the 2008 School Board Best Practices Form perhaps you can use some of it.

Not all young men are in a gang though that seems to a very big focus area and it should be. However there are a great number of young men that still desperately need a role model that is active in their life someone they can actually pick up the phone and talk to and that person know who they are.

I'm convinced that most young man don't have anyone that speaks into their life. When I say speaks into their life I mean more than just words. Most of us know that words are sometimes a very small part of communication. We have to attach actions to the words that we speak.

We have to learn view every young man from the potential that you see in him and not necessarily the appearance or the package that he is wrapped in. Most of the time we make the critical error of only looking on the outside and never on the inside. I am convinced that every young man is reachable if you are willing to step out of your comfort zone and try.

It's interesting for what ever reason I usually have more in-depth conversations with our participants outside of the sessions. **WE HAVE ALL RACES IN OUR SESSIONS NOT JUST AFRICAN AMERICAN.** The other day it wasn't even at a session one young man saw me and came up and said how much he enjoys every session. **I was caught off guard because he normally just sits there with his hair brushed over his eyes and you wonder is he sleep or what?** He spent the next 30 minutes telling me about the difficulties and the struggles that he and his father are having.

**Another young man came up to me and said I need your phone number because if I get into trouble I need some one to call.** Unfortunately he lost my number and the next time I saw him he was in the detention center, which is the last step before prison. We were able reconnect and put plan in place to help him get back on the right track

- Goals:
1. We plan to continue the program over the summer months. This will allow us to keep building on the momentum we have established during the school year.
  2. This year we are wanting to take as many young men as possible on a weekend leadership camp
  3. Extending the age group to begin to reach the middle school age and below  
The earlier we begin the stronger the foundation we can build.

Thanks  
Pastor William Vann

*House Social Services Budget Committee  
March 18, 2008  
Attachment 8*

In Support of  
House Bill 2965



COPY

**Police Department**

Mr. William T. Davitt  
1205 Bitting  
Wichita, Kansas 67203

January 28, 2008

Dear Mr. Davitt,

I appreciate you taking the time to send me your January 9, 2008 letter regarding the "Fatherhood Promotion Campaign". I read the attached articles regarding the death of Robert Ridge. The statistical information that you included in your letter was alarming and is a call to arms for the community to reduce the trends of children growing up without a father in their life.

Throughout our existence as humans, the family, community and church have been critical to our foundations as children. We learned our values and principles from our parents, family members and nurturing mentors. Today, our young people who are considered at-risk appear to be missing the core values of honesty, respect, and responsibility. We must instill in them at an early age the importance of character; a good education and perseverance, which are necessary to overcome life's diverse challenges.

I applaud your efforts to challenge our community, elected and appointed officials to get involved with the "Fatherhood Promotion Campaign". I am supportive of positive community efforts that with get parents involved with their children's life. Collectively, we can thwart the current efforts to pressure our children to join gangs and become involved in a life of crime.

Again, thank you for sending your letter regarding the "Fatherhood Promotion Campaign".

Sincerely,

Norman D. Williams  
Chief of Police  
Wichita Police Department

**Office of the Chief of Police**

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*House Social Services Budget Committee  
March 18, 2008  
Attachment 9*

## **In Support of House Bill 2887**

Mr. Chairman and Committee Members,

Thank you for hearing my testimony today.

I recently heard about your efforts in regards to the above bill. I would like to send to you my deep appreciation for your concern regarding this matter. I myself became a father at age 18. The mother and I split and I took on raising my daughter on my own. My daughter lives with me full time, I worked two jobs to pay my bills, I rented a home. I did not accept any state assistance except for day care help. My daughter and I are now very close, she still lives with me full time and visits her mother twice a month. Education for young fathers or older father for that matter is very important. I can not tell you how many people did not believe me when I told them that I was a single father who raised my daughter myself. I think young fathers are afraid of the responsibility or that their life will end because they have become a father, and that is not the case at all. There needs to be more education for men and help for men. If you are a young mother there is so much help out there for you, so many resources. I believe that Fatherhood education needs to begin in High School, as this is a major part of learning responsibility. I am so glad that someone is finally stepping up and trying to get something like this done. I myself have thought many times how I could help educate young fathers and help them to understand how important it is for both them and the child to be a part of each others lives. I have even thought of writing some sort of book along these lines, but with young children time is short. I am now married and have a son with my wife. The four us live in our own home that we do not rent we pay a mortgage on, I have an awesome job and have left those who said that I would never make it behind. You have my full support.

*Brandon L. Decker*  
2025 Ravena  
Park City KS, 67219  
316-201-1323

*Ad Astra per Aspera*

*House Social Services Budget Committee  
March 18, 2008  
Attachment 10*