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To: Hon. Kellie Warren, Chair, House Judiciary
From: Todd Thompson, Leavenworth County Attorney; Former KCDAA President and Legislative Chair
Date: January 19, 2023

Re: Proponent testimony regarding SB 240

Hon. Chairman Warren and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and provide written testimony regarding of SB 240. My name is Todd Thompson, and I am the legislative chair and former President of the Kansas County and District Attorney's association. Today, I am asking on behalf of the Kansas County and District Attorneys Association (KCDAA) as a Former President of that organization to pass SB 240.

KCDAA and myself appreciate the proposal of this valuable legislation. As we all know, children should be any parents' most precious and important concern. Also, we all know that fentanyl use and overdoses are sweeping our Nation and our State. The CDC has put forward statistics that at least 150 people a day are dying of an overdose related to synthetic opioids like fentanyl. The CDC says that fentanyl itself is 50 times stronger than heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine. We hear how one pill can kill, and all have heard stories of children in our State dying. We agree with this bill that where a person is manufacturing, attempting to manufacture, or distributing fentanyl related controlled substances, and we are assured they are not medically authorized to do so, they should have an increased penalty. Parents should be expected and responsible for having a safe environment for children.

Including in increasing the penalty for fentanyl related substances, we would also ask to increase the penalty related to firearm related harm. My county alone, and counties across Kansas have had instances where very young children are left near a loaded firearm with no parental supervision. We have seen time and time again where a child has picked up that firearm and shot it, harming themselves or others. I have personally prosecuted multiple of these cases. The NRA and KRA both agree this is not responsible gun safety. We would ask that an inclusion to this bill would also be to appropriately punish parents for allowing young children access to firearms.

Respectfully submitted,

Todd Thompson
Leavenworth County Attorney
Legislative Chair and Former President, Kansas County and District Attorneys Association