

## Written-Only Testimony in Support of HB 2357

**TO: House Committee on Judiciary**

**RE: House Bill 2357 – Written Testimony**

**FR: Matthew Kleinmann**

**DATE: 2/10/2025**

**Chair Rep. Susan Humphries, Vice Chair Rep. Bob Lewis, Ranking Minority Member Rep. Dennis "Boog" Highberger, and Members of the Committee,**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Matthew Kleinmann, and I live in Wyandotte County. I am writing to let you know that I very much support House Bill 2357, which wants to seal and expunge certain eviction records.

In Kansas, an eviction filing is a permanent stain that can follow a tenant for years, long after the case has been dismissed, the debt has been paid, or the person has regained stability. Even when an eviction is baseless or resolved in favor of the tenant, the record remains, shutting families out of safe housing and forcing them into a cycle of insecurity. This bill takes a long-overdue step toward fairness by ensuring that eviction records are not an automatic and lifelong barrier to housing.

Whether justified or not, eviction filings are scraped by tenant screening services and used to generate risk scores, making it nearly impossible for renters to secure housing. Property management companies, many with automated screening processes, routinely deny applications based on these records without allowing tenants to explain their situation. A single eviction case—dismissed or not—can push families into worse living conditions, extended stays in motels, or even homelessness.

We know that eviction is not just a housing issue—it is a public health issue, an economic issue, and a moral issue. A stable home is the foundation for everything else in life. When families are evicted, employers lose workers who can no longer reliably get to their jobs, schools lose students forced to move districts, and communities suffer.

This bill does not wipe eviction cases off the record immediately. It ensures that cases remain sealed unless a judgment is entered for the landlord, and it allows for expungement only after a reasonable period—two years—if the judgment has been satisfied and no additional evictions have occurred. These are measured, responsible policies that balance the interests of landlords and tenants alike.

Sealing and expunging eviction records is not about erasing accountability but ensuring tenants are not permanently locked out of housing due to a single financial hardship. It

is about preventing a lousy month from becoming a lifetime of barriers. It is about ensuring our system does not punish people indefinitely for circumstances they have worked hard to overcome.

Kansas already recognizes the value of mediation in resolving disputes fairly, and this bill encourages its use in eviction cases. Mediation leads to better outcomes for landlords and tenants—keeping people housed, ensuring landlords are paid, and reducing strain on our courts. This is the kind of practical, solutions-oriented policy that Kansans expect from their elected officials.

We have a chance to enact a reform that aligns with our values—values of fairness, second chances, and the belief that a stable home should not be a privilege reserved only for the most fortunate. I urge you to support House Bill 2357 and allow Kansas families to rebuild and move forward.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Isaiah 32:18 should inspire your vote, reminding us, 'My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest.' This bill ensures that Kansans have a fair chance at stability and the dignity of a secure home. This bill is an opportunity to ensure fairness and dignity in housing for all Kansans.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Kleinmann,  
Wyandotte County, Kansas