



KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF COURT SERVICES OFFICERS

TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
BRYAN J. WEISER, LEGISLATIVE CHAIRPERSON
KANSAS ASSOCIATION OF COURT SERVICES OFFICERS (KACSO)
ON SB 368 – AMENDING PROVISIONS REGARDING SUPERVISION OF DRUG
OFFENDERS
FEBRUARY 10, 2012

Senator Owens and Members of the Committee:

My name is Bryan Weiser and I am a Court Services Officer (CSO) for the 9th Judicial District. I serve as the Legislative Chairperson for the Kansas Association of Court Services Officers (KACSO). I would like to thank the committee for giving me the opportunity to provide written testimony in regards to SB 368.

Very briefly, CSOs are employed within all 31 judicial districts and provide invaluable services to the District Courts of Kansas. These duties include but are not limited to: preparing presentence investigation reports on felony and misdemeanor convictions, supervising adult and juvenile offenders placed on probation, supervising pretrial and appeal bond defendants, conducting child custody investigations, mediation services, and providing Child in Need of Care (CINC) services.

Considering, SB 368, in its current form, KACSO would like to take a neutral position regarding its passage. However, KACSO would like to emphasize to the committee that the passage of the current bill would require offenders who have been identified as low risk and or low need at the time of presentence investigation and prior to the time of sentencing to be supervised on probation by court services with the district court. The passage of SB 368 in its current form would divert a significant number of offenders from community corrections supervision to court services supervision. Information from the Kansas Sentencing Commission shows a seven year annual average of 138 low risk, low need offenders who would now be placed with court services supervision.

At present, court services offices statewide are experiencing a shortage of CSOs. The reasons of this is twofold, one being due to current annual budgets, the judicial branch is maintaining a significant number of vacancies, and two due to the significant economic downturn over the past several years any additional positions deemed appropriate and necessary have been unfilled. As stated above, KACSO remains neutral regarding the passage of SB 368, however, we have significant concerns regarding the potential workload impact of court service offices throughout the state.

Should you need additional information or have further questions, I'd be glad to present additional written testimony, or appear before the committee if requested. Thank you for accepting this testimony and for your service to the citizens of Kansas.

The mission of the Kansas Association of Court Services Officers is to challenge, educate, support and advocate for the membership by promoting fellowship and professionalism, providing relevant training opportunities and maintaining communication with all members. The organization will further this mission by encouraging collaboration with our Court Services Officers and professional organizations and by recognizing member excellence.

An American Probation and Parole Association Affiliate