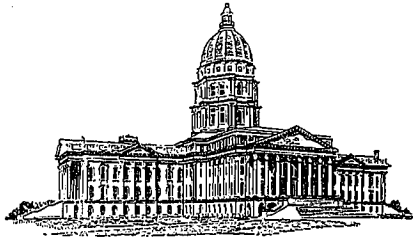


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GREG SMITH

Chairman Kinzer, Vice Chairman Bruchman, Ranking Minority Pauls and members of the committee:

SB 118 is a request from constituents, victim advocacy groups, and those who have loved ones who have gone missing, and are still missing. Some have been missing for years. I know from personal experience what it is like to have a loved one go missing. The blessing for me is that I know where my daughter is. She was not found alive, but she was found. I owe a major debt of gratitude to the men and women of law enforcement, the first responder community, and the community as a whole for their efforts to bring Kelsey home. My family was fortunate but many families wonder where their loved one is. SB 118 is an effort to aid in the recovery of those that are missing.

Time is of the essence when a person goes missing. The critical time period for the start of investigation is "immediately". Statistical analysis shows that the first 24 hours after disappearance can make the difference in finding a living subject or a dead subject. Note that I said from disappearance, not from the discovery of the disappearance.

Let me give you a hypothetical example. A person goes missing at 6 PM (reasons unknown) but the family isn't aware that something has happened until 10 PM. They start an investigation of their own that takes two hours and leads to no answers. Finally, they contact the police. They

HOUSE JUDICIARY

DATE:

ATTACHMENT 10

are down to eighteen hours left before the police have been notified. When they do notify the police the person on the phone or the officer who responded listens to the person reporting the missing family member. Receiving no information of foul play, they tell the reporting party to wait and see if they show up before filing a report.

Does this happen? Yes. Should it happen? No. Locating a missing person is the highest priority and there is no requirement to wait twenty-four hours. SB 118 makes it crystal clear that law enforcement will take a report and cause the information to be entered into the NCIC Missing and Unidentified Person Database. It also makes clear that investigating the incident is a priority.

The bill is based on model legislation and is three years in the making. There has been some concern raised by advocates of the long term missing that a more active role should be taken in the NamUS program. I agree. The NamUs program is sponsored by the Office of Justice Programs. According to their website (www.namus.gov):

The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) is a national centralized repository and resource center for missing persons and unidentified decedent records. NamUs is a free online system that can be searched by medical examiners, coroners, law enforcement officials and the general public from all over the country in hopes of resolving these cases.

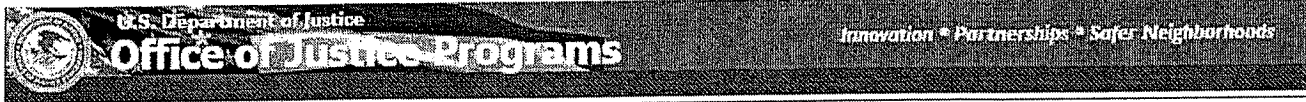
In short, it is an avenue to putting more eyes on the missing. Anyone can view the data in the database. Anyone can enter information into the Missing Persons Database, which is verified by the NamUs staff prior to allowing it to be posted to the website. It also includes multiple resources for families that have a missing person.

One of the proposals is that KBI and/or the entering agency enter all missing persons and unidentified decedents into the NamUs database after the initial report has been generated. Immediate response is the priority but this is a great safeguard. I understand that resources are tight for everyone and the addition of one more database being populated could lead to more time and expense. But if it brings just one person home, isn't it worth it?

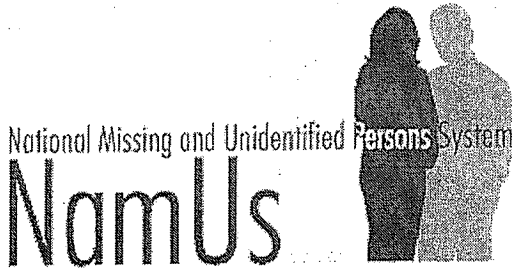
Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Greg Smith".

Senator Greg Smith



NamUs National Missing and Unidentified Persons System



The National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NamUs) is a national centralized repository and resource center for missing persons and unidentified decedent records. NamUs is a free online system that can be searched by medical examiners, coroners, law enforcement officials and the general public from all over the country in hopes of resolving these cases.

The **Missing Persons Database** contains information about missing persons that can be entered by anyone; however before it appears as a case on NamUs, the information is verified. NamUs provides a user with a variety of resources, including the ability to print missing persons posters and receive free biometric collection and testing assistance. Other resources include links to state clearinghouses, medical examiner and coroner offices, law enforcement agencies, victim assistance groups and pertinent legislation.

The **Unidentified Persons Database** contains information entered by medical examiners and coroners. Unidentified persons are people who have died and whose bodies have not been identified. Anyone can search this database using characteristics such as sex, race, distinct body features and even dental information.

The newly added **UnClaimed Persons database (UCP)** contains information about deceased persons who have been identified by name, but for whom no next of kin or family member has been identified or located to claim the body for burial or other disposition. Only medical examiners and coroners may enter cases in the UCP database. However, the database is searchable by the public using a missing person's name and year of birth.

When a new missing persons or unidentified decedent case is entered into NamUs, the system automatically performs cross-matching comparisons between the databases, searching for matches or similarities between cases.

NamUs provides free DNA testing and other forensic services, such as anthropology and odontology assistance. NamUs' Missing Persons Database and Unidentified Persons Database are now available in Spanish.