

Testimony before the
House Judiciary Committee

On

HB 2198 - Lifeline 911

By

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Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of HB 2198. Also known as Lifeline 911, it would encourage those experiencing or witnessing a medical emergency to seek help, thus reducing unnecessary deaths due to alcohol in Kansas. The Student Body Presidents of all the Regents Universities are united in support of this bill.

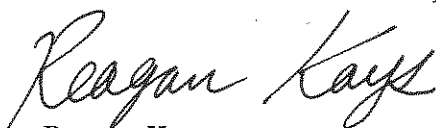
The intention of this statute is to discourage underage drinking, however, it also serves to encourage those in need of medical assistance to utilize our emergency medical services when they or their friend's lives are in danger.

According to the Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, between 2011 and 2012, 68.6 percent of 12 to 20-year-olds surveyed had participated in binge drinking, within the last 30 days. Lifeline 911 provides an incentive for individuals to call emergency services as they have been taught to do, when they see someone in danger or are afraid for their lives. With 50,000 reported cases of alcohol poisoning each year, it is important for these underage drinkers not be deterred from acting with confidence in contacting 911, rather than taking no action.

Currently, 21 other states and the District of Columbia have passed legislation similar to this bill, including our Midwestern neighbors; Oklahoma, Colorado and Texas. At present, Nebraska and Arizona are also deliberating comparable legislation. These states, along with hundreds of universities across the nation, have taken on the responsibility of protecting and preserving the lives of students and young adults.

HB 2198 provides the means to prevent many deaths of underage drinkers. Individuals will take responsibility for their own or their friend's actions, rather than leaving them at the hospital and driving off, or simply putting them to bed. They will act responsibly and save a life.

We urge you to recommend HB 2198 favorably for passage. Thank you for your consideration. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.



Reagan Kays
Kansas State University, Student Body President