



## Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault

3100 Broadway Street, Suite 400, Kansas City, MO 64111

816-931-4527

[www.mocsa.org](http://www.mocsa.org)

Testimony of a MOCSA Victim Advocate

IN SUPPORT OF HB 2147 PROTECTION FROM STALKING AND SEXUAL ASSAULT ACT

Before the House Judiciary Committee

WRITTEN COMMENTS ONLY

February 19, 2015

Chairman Barker and Members of the Committee:

Jessie Funk, Coordinator of Advocacy Services at the Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault, wishes to be recorded in strong support for HB 2147 Protection from Stalking and Sexual Assault Act. I would also like to thank Representative Gail Finney for introducing and supporting this important legislation.

This legislation would amend the protection from abuse act and protection from stalking act to specifically include protections from sexual assault. This amendment is necessary because currently protection orders in Kansas are only available to victims of stalking or victims of abuse by intimate partners or household members, which excludes victims of sexual assault who do not qualify for a Protection from Abuse or Protection from Stalking order.

I have worked as an advocate for survivors of sexual assault for the past seven years. During that time I have worked with many people who did not qualify for an order of protection because the perpetrator who sexually assaulted them was not an intimate partner or household member and because their assault did not meet the definition of stalking, which requires a course of conduct involving two or more separate acts. These survivors were often victimized by an acquaintance or someone they had just met. They were extremely fearful for their safety because the perpetrator usually knew where they lived, worked, or went to school.

and could come in contact with them through those avenues or by other means, such as over the phone or online. Some of the survivors expressed that it made no sense to them why they would have to wait to possibly experience another horrible act by the perpetrator before they could meet the qualifications for an order of protection for stalking.

Sadly, the majority of sexual assault survivors will never see their perpetrators brought to justice in criminal court, so obtaining an order of protection provides a much needed civil option for safety and validation. It is unacceptable that many survivors of sexual assault do not have this option. Therefore, I strongly urge the House Judiciary Committee to support HB 2147.

Sincerely,

Jessie Funk

Coordinator of Advocacy Services

Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault (MOCSA)