

State of Kansas
House of Representatives

State Capitol
Topeka, Kansas 66612
(785) 296-7500
ramon.gonzalez@house.ks.gov



P.O. Box 12
Perry, Kansas 66073
(785) 597-5917

Ramon C. Gonzalez, Jr.
Representative, 47th District

House Committee on Judiciary
HB2611
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Testimony of Representative Ramon C. Gonzalez, Jr.

Thank you Chairman Barker and Committee Members for the opportunity to testify on HB2611.

During the fall of 2015 I was asked to participate in the investigation of a 1999 homicide case. The man convicted of the crime had been incarcerated in a State of Kansas Prison for murder, kidnapping and indecent liberties with a child. The man had been in prison since the year 2000.

The results of the review and new DNA evidence were presented to a District judge on the eighth day of December 2015. The decision by the District judge found that the man was wrongfully convicted and incarcerated. The District Judge ordered the man's immediate release.

This Bill addresses the financial loss of a person who faces a wrongful conviction and provides for financial relief for the period of incarceration. I was not aware that the state of Kansas did not have a wrongfully convicted compensation law. Thirty States in the United States currently have such compensation laws.

I will let each member think about how they would function financially if they had to face a similar wrong conviction.

Realizing there are other factors I have not addressed, I will close and stand for questions at this time.