



SUPREME COURT OF KANSAS

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Senate Judiciary

Testimony in Conceptual Support of

SB59 Magistrate Judge Jurisdiction

January 28, 2015

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in conceptual support of SB 59, which would modify magistrate judge jurisdiction. We support a bill that provides jurisdictional authority to magistrate judges to preside over cases as they did prior to 2014 amendments with additional jurisdictional authority that was added in the 2014 amendments.

Legislation last year attempted to increase the scope of jurisdiction to magistrate judges. However, in the process, jurisdiction over some case types was unintentionally stricken. These were case types over which magistrate judges have historically and regularly presided such as wildlife and parks violations, protection from abuse cases, and protection from stalking actions. This bill is an attempt to fix that. While we support the concept, the bill appears to provide a combination of authority and absence of authority that is difficult to navigate.

We ask that you consider this concept favorably and pass a bill that is amended to cure the problems caused in the present version. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 59. I am happy to answer questions.