

Senate Judiciary

Neutral SB 378

February 10, 2016

Chairman King and members of the committee,

The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) is a statewide non-profit organization whose membership is the 29 sexual and domestic violence programs serving survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault across the state.

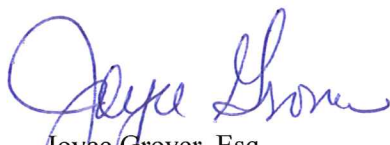
K.S.A. 44-1131 through K.S.A. 44-1133, the Kansas law prohibiting employment discrimination or retaliation against victims of domestic and sexual violence, allows victims to take any accrued paid leave or a total of up to 8 days unpaid leave with reasonable notice in a calendar year to:

1. Obtain or try to obtain a restraining order or a similar type of relief or order for the victim or victim's children;
2. Seek medical care for injuries resulting from domestic violence or sexual assault;
3. Obtain services from a domestic violence or rape crisis program; or
4. Appear in court proceedings related to domestic violence or sexual assault.

Incidents of domestic and sexual violence can leave victims with multiple medical and legal needs. Victims may need to schedule appointments for follow up medical treatment; meet with advocates from domestic and sexual violence programs for support and assistance; and attend court dates for protection orders, child custody, or criminal court. Often court dates and doctor's appointments do not work around a victim's schedule. It is incredibly important for victims to be able to take time off to address these needs.

Currently, the law provides protection for victims - protection that victims depend on. Unfortunately, these provisions have no meaningful enforcement authority with the Kansas Secretary of Labor, leaving victims who have depended on this law with little recourse. SB 378 would transfer enforcement authority from the Secretary of Labor to the Kansas Human Rights Commission in order to facilitate enforcement of the law.

Submitted by,



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