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TESTIMONIAL AGAINST SB157 & SB158

My Name is Claudia A. Yaujar-Amaro, I am here to testify against SB157 & SB158. Immigration is a Federal issue, which I believe should not be discussed at this level, especially with everything our State is going through.

I was born in Mexico and moved to this country in 1988 at the age of 12, after my father was killed in Mexico. My mother moved to the U.S. looking for safety for her 4 daughters. I moved to Wichita Kansas in the 90s as a teenager, and Kansas is my home. I got married in Wichita and my son was born there. I have always been very active in my community.

In 2005 my husband was pulled over by an officer in Wichita, and was arrested for no Driver License, I went to help, I did not know what was about to happen; both, my husband and I were arrested that morning by Immigration officers, they treat us very bad, I was worried about my son who was only 5 years old and I had left him in his school that day. I was released the next morning but we had to fight my husband's case until we had nothing left. My husband was deported in January of 2006, and I made the difficult decision to move to Mexico with him.

It was hard for the 3 of us to adapt in Mexico, my son was bullied for being American, he was abused physically and emotionally by other kids and teachers, he had no rights to Medical and other services. We spent 7 years there and we missed our home, friends and family in Wichita. My son fall into depression, everything got worst in 2012 when 2 police officers kidnapped my husband for ransom, we had no money, no family around us. Me and my son came back to the U.S. in the summer of 2013 after I did an action at the border, I spent 17 days in a detention Center in Arizona before I came back to Wichita, My husband spent 2 years and 3 months, and he is home now. My son is a happy teenager now, and his grades have improved since his dad is home with us. My son just turned 17 years old, he is a sophomore, with mostly A's on his report card, he is the captain of the Varsity soccer team, and he dreams to attend college to become an Engineer. My Son is a U.S citizen with big dreams and 2 undocumented parents who work so hard everyday not only in our jobs but also in the community to create a better place for him.

There are many families like mine in Kansas, who drive everyday to work and give the best they have trying not to get in trouble, because all they want is to give their kids a better life than the one they had when they were kids. Most of Immigrant families in Kansas have mixed status like mine, U.S. citizen, Green card holders, Dreamers, undocumented. Just like my husband was deported in 2006, our families have been separated for years, the Immigration officers have deported million of people, some they say are criminals, some I am sure are not; why would they need help from Highway Patrol or Local enforcement? They have already been doing their

job without help; they have the resources to do it, why do they want others to help them?

We already know that the person who wrote these bills wants to make our lives miserable, and I can tell you, our lives are not easy anyways, our families are been ripped apart; Immigration officers are already doing their work deporting "criminals". Local Enforcement's responsibility is to ensure everyone's safety, they need our voices to denounce crime, to trust them, to ask questions so we can learn and follow the law, how can they get that from us if we fear them? How can we learn and teach our U.S. citizen kids if we do not trust our authorities?

I am still undocumented, I do have a work permit, my case is in process, as you know how complex the immigration law is, everything always discretionary, but my son is a U.S. citizen, my sisters, my nieces, many friends. I work for a school district, I serve several boards and city committees, I help register people to vote, last year we registered more than 200 new Latino voters in the Wichita area, I have online groups and bilingual pages to inform and teach people how all of you work, each day more and more people including Latinos are becoming familiar with your faces, your decisions on our behalf, I am sure you have received many emails and calls asking you not to support these bills. I want to ask you in the name of all these people who have been contacting you to not support these bills, I have read about all of you, most of you talk about "common sense", please lets use the common sense today and stop this now, our State is struggling, you should be using this time to talk about other priorities. We all know the Highway patrol and local enforcement do not have the resources to comply with what is being asked on these bills.

Most families in Kansas are mixed status like mine. These bills would not only hurt undocumented, these bills would hurt the whole State in one-way or another. I do not want more families to go through what my family went thru; I do not want more Kansans to go through what my son went through as a child. I love Kansas like you do; I work hard everyday for my community like you do, I ask for your Respect as I respect you. PLEASE DO NOT SUPPORT SB157 & SB158. THANK YOU.