

Dear Chairman Estes and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jo Ella Hoyer. I am a parent, a gun owner, and a volunteer with the Kansas Chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America. We are the nation's largest gun violence prevention organization, devoted to advancing policies that respect the Second Amendment and protect our communities from gun violence.

I'm writing in support of HB 2145, an important piece of legislation that will help protect victims of domestic violence in Kansas by keeping guns out of the hands of domestic abusers.

Domestic violence in Kansas is undeniably a problem, and we can be doing more to protect women and families in our state. In the last five years, 119 people in Kansas have been killed in domestic violence homicides, and nearly 3 out of 5 of these incidents involved a firearm. Nationally, the presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation makes it 5 times more likely that a woman will be killed.

Federal law prohibits abusers convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence crimes and abusers subject to domestic violence restraining orders from possessing firearms. Most states have similar laws that empower state law enforcement to help keep guns out of the hands of these domestic abusers, but Kansas does not.

HB 2145 would match federal law by prohibiting people who have been convicted of misdemeanor crimes of domestic violence and those subject to active domestic violence restraining orders from possessing firearms, giving state law enforcement important tools to protect victims and keep guns away from domestic abusers. States that have enacted this law have seen a 25% reduction in intimate partner homicides; this bill will save lives.

Since 2013, 25 states and the District of Columbia have strengthened laws keeping guns away from domestic abusers, and the idea has proved to be noncontroversial. HB 2145 recently passed the House unanimously by a 120-0 vote, and states like Utah, Tennessee, and Wisconsin have seen bipartisan groups of lawmakers joining together to pass reforms to keep guns away from domestic abusers.

I urge you to stand with domestic violence victims and law enforcement by supporting HB 2145.

Regards,

Jo Ella Hoyer
Volunteer with the Kansas Chapter of Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America