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**Testimony to the Kansas State Senate Judiciary Committee**  
Kansas State Capital Building, Room 346-s  
Topeka, Ks 66612

As a registered voter in the State of Kansas, I Support SB257

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for taking the time and listening to a specific problem, which I believe is hurting not only my minor child, but also many children in the State of Kansas.

Previous to the Judgement in my divorce in April of 2016, I was involved in every facet of both my children's lives (18 and 14 at the time). From coaching or helping with almost every sports team they played on, to helping them daily with their homework, to equally helping raise them to be productive, happy young adults. So in essence, that day, I went from having my kids 100% of the time to having my daughter 26% of the time, even though I was deemed a proven, fit parent who was in better financial shape to support my children, by both the conciliator and the GAL for my case. Yet the court ignored these findings. Mind you, this was with zero past abuse from me to my ex (yet I was emotionally and physically abused most of the marriage), or the children, or anyone for that matter. This judgement has not only hurt the relationship between me and my children, but has hurt their potential mental growth towards adulthood. The other thing it has hurt, in my opinion, is the relationship between my children and all of their grandparents, as their mother will not allow the grandparents (including her own parents) to spend time with the children other than on my 26% of the time.

I believe the current court system creates the worst form of parental alienation, and gives the custodial parent an advantage, which is used to manipulate the custodial agreement. I also believe, if we would have walked into the court room with presumed equal parenting time, the majority of the fighting and arguing that went on for well over 18 months would have been minimal at best, and had less negative impact on the children. Yet due to the current system, parents are pitted against each other all in the name of money, to prove their love of their children. I do truly believe the current system has failed me, my children and my children's grandparents.

I do understand shared parenting will not work in cases where past abuse is proven, or if the distance between parents is too far for the children, to maintain a normal schooling schedule. This is why SB257 leaves the option for the judge to override this and rule in what is best for the children. However the court should recognize that studies overwhelming show that children greatly benefit from having both fit, able parents in their lives equally.

I would like you to recognize that passing this law will not help my situation specifically, due to the age of my minor child. However, Children should have the fundamental right, as spelled out in the United States Constitution to have access to both fit, able parents. The current system in the state of Kansas is flawed. I am asking you to do your job and protect the children in the State of Kansas and give them equal access to both fit, able parents. Please vote yes for SB257. The children of the State of Kansas are counting on you.

Respectfully,

Victor T. McDow Jr