

Testimony in Opposition to of Senate Bill 257

Presented to the Senate Judiciary Committee
By Kelly Young, LMSW, LMAC

January 29, 2018

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in opposition of SB257.

I am a licensed social worker and addiction counselor in the state of Kansas. I am also the program director for a child welfare program serving families in the state of Kansas. I have been serving families in the state of Kansas for the last 25 years.

A number of families are referred each year to child welfare services in the state of Kansas as a direct or indirect result of domestic violence. Often, child welfare service providers are asked to partner with families to obtain and maintain a safety for themselves and their children.

I have grave concerns regarding Senate Bill 257 as that relates to safety of children and families impacted by domestic violence.


In my 25 years of providing services in the state of Kansas I have witnessed and been privy to numerous accounts of domestic violence and the obstacles faced by adult survivors in attempting to obtain and maintain safety for their children.

Often adult survivors are expected by child welfare service providers to separate from the abusive partner. Many families receiving child welfare services are faced with a number of obstacles in separating from the abusive partner.

Perpetrators of domestic violence often misuse the legal system as an extension of their battering behavior to instill fear, harass, and gain custody of the children. I fear this bill, if enacted, would unintentionally create another obstacle for a non-offending parenting in addressing child risk and safety concerns as that relates to the offending parenting.

On behalf of safety for all children in Kansas I implore the committee to oppose this bil.

Respectfully,


Kelly Young, LMSW, LMAC