



To: Chairman Patton, and Members of the House Judiciary

From: Juliane Walker Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas

Date: February 11th, 2020

Re: Proponent Testimony to HB2306

Good afternoon Chairman Patton and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard regarding HB2306. I am the Executive Director of the Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas and am here on behalf of the **16 Accredited Children's Advocacy Centers in Kansas.**

It is first critical to review with you the long commitment of the Kansas Legislature to quality multidisciplinary investigation of the Abuse of Children in our State, therefore, I have attached to this testimony Kansas Statutes K.S.A. 38-2226, and 38-2227 enacted 14years ago in 2006 which direct the critical government function of protecting children from abuse and neglect

38-2226- JOINT Investigation of reports of child abuse and neglect by **DCF and Law Enforcement.** and **COOPERATION** between **DCF, Law Enforcement, and School Personnel** with the assistance of the **County or District Attorney.**

38-2227- Establishes Children's Advocacy Centers

Conduct Forensic Interviews of children in a neutral child focused facility.

Coordinate multi-disciplinary teams comprised of law enforcement, child protective services, county or district attorneys, mental health and medical treatment providers, child victim advocates to respond to reported child abuse and neglect

Collect and report data on incidence of child abuse and neglect.

The CACKS of Kansas are very familiar with the dynamics surrounding the delayed reporting of Child Sexual Assault. We are testifying today in support of HB2306 as it is a measure that acknowledges what we know and understand about the delayed reporting of child sexual assault and abuse. It is a hidden crime that often goes unreported or is reported years later when the child is safe and secure from the abuser. Every nine minutes is sexually assaulted in the U.S., and 93 percent know the perpetrator Many perpetrators of sexual abuse are in a position of trust or responsible for the child's care, such as a family member, teacher, clergy member, or coach.

Most child victims of sexual assault disclose, if they disclose at all, during adulthood, with a median age of 48, and the average age of 52.

We urge the passage of the measure

The Following Services are Provided by the Children's Advocacy Centers of Kansas

- Coordinates the multidisciplinary response to cases of child abuse at the very onset of a child abuse investigation.
- Utilizes an expertly developed national model for the response to child abuse cases.
- Brings together a multidisciplinary team of law enforcement, child protective services, prosecutors, family advocates, medical and mental health professionals, and others in an environment designed to minimize additional trauma to the child.
- Available services are provided at no cost to victims and their families.
- Unduplicated and unique from any other services offered in the state.
- Add to the effectiveness of the child protection system in Kansas by supporting the work of the Department for Children and Families, local law enforcement, and prosecution.
- Provide critical support for non-offending caregivers in order to lessen the likelihood children will need to be placed outside of the home.
- Kansas currently has 16 nationally accredited CACs with 24 physical locations and 6 mobile units.
- 31% of Kansas counties remain underserved or unserved by a CAC.
- CAC's in Kansas also provide prevention services to over 41,000 individuals.

CAC Services for Abused Children

More than 4,800 children served annually.

65% of children served are 12 and younger.

90% of the offenders are known to the victim.

More than 2,000 referrals are made for specialized therapy.

Thank you for hearing us on behalf of the Children's Advocacy Centers in Kansas

Child Advocacy Center of Sedgwick County (Wichita)

Dell Hayden Memorial CAC (Great Bend)

Hope Unlimited CAC (Iola)

Horizons CAC (Hutchinson, Antony)

LifeHouse CAC (Topeka)

Pittsburg Children's Advocacy Center (Pittsburg)

Stepping Stones CAC (Manhattan)

Sunlight CAC (El Dorado)

Chris's Place CAC (Salina)

Heart to Heart CAC (Newton, McPherson)

Hope's Place CAC (Concordia)

Leavenworth CAC (Leavenworth)

Meadowlark House CAC (Dodge City)

SOS Child Advocacy Center (Emporia, Burlington)

Sunflower House (Shawnee)

Western Kansas CAC (Colby, Scott City, Sublette, Garden City, Liberal, Hays, Mobile Units)

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