

My name is Mary Snipes. I am a constituent from Geary County, City of Junction City, Kansas 66441. I am submitting testimony virtually due to state and county health guidelines in an effort to keep myself and others safe. I am a mother, a parent, a wife, a sister, an aunt, and a friend. I've had COVID-19, pneumonia, and currently wearing oxygen. I am a Survivor of Gun Violence and COVID-19.

My family's life changed on Friday, August 31st, 2018 when someone shot and took our 29 year-old son, Felix Snipes, away from us. Felix had an awesome smile, would tell jokes that sometimes weren't funny but you just had to laugh, he cared deeply about his siblings and parents. Felix was free spirited, he loved wearing loud neon colors but he also enjoyed dressing up as if he was a model, he wanted everyone to get along with each other, especially family.

He cared about giving to others even when he didn't have anything, he was one of the top ranked athletes in the state of Kansas for sports during his high school years. We have had so many great memories and lovable moments of Felix that I could go on and on and on. Felix was our child, our son, a brother...he was not a number. I miss him everyday. Losing a child is like a form of "EMPTINESS!" This is my reality.

I am submitting testimony concerning the concealed carry reciprocity bill. HB 2058 would automatically recognize licenses to carry a concealed firearm issued by other jurisdictions. This bill will be a setback for Kansas gun laws. I oppose this bill, because it would allow people with permits from other states to carry concealed handguns in Kansas, even if they would be ineligible for a Kansas permit. It will make our families, communities, schools, homes, neighborhoods, parks, and stores dangerously unsafe.

We have gone through anger, hurt, pain, denial, questioning why -- many emotions -- but we will keep going. We all need to take a stand on gun safety solutions for our state, families, communities, neighborhoods. Think of the total amount of lives taken from senseless acts of gun violence. Please vote no on HB 2058.

Mary Snipes