



Kansas County & District Attorneys Association

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To: House Judiciary Committee
From: Todd Thompson, Leavenworth County Attorney
Date: February 2, 2021
RE: House Bill 2095

Chairman Patton and members of the Committee. Thank you for allowing me time to express my support for House Bill 2095 and share some of my experiences. Temporarily restricting individuals suffering from a mental health crisis to possess a firearm is a good idea. In 2020 my office filed twenty-six care and treatment cases alleging that a person was a danger to themselves or others, needing to be committed for inpatient hospitalization. Of those twenty-six patients, ten patients also had pending criminal charges for violent crimes, or a history of violent criminal behavior. One patient had just been released from the Lansing Correctional Facility where he had been serving a sentence for second degree murder.

When a petition for a care and treatment case is filed, the proposed patient is in an acute state of crisis. This is a high-risk time for acts of violence to occur. One case filed this year was initiated due to the family's reports that the proposed patient was having auditory and visual hallucinations. The proposed patient was walking around the house with her loaded gun threatening to shoot people that she believed were present. Her two children were also in the home. Thankfully, our local mental health professionals were able to work with our office to have a petition filed and the patient committed before a tragedy occurred.

I strongly believe that by allowing the courts to issue an order restraining an individual in such a heightened state of mental health crisis from possessing a firearm, many lives in our community will be protected. I urge you to pass HB 2095 as proposed.