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ROSS CAPPS, LABORATORY DIRECTOR

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To: Chairman Patton and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

From: Ross Capps
On behalf of the Johnson County Sheriff's Office Criminalistics Laboratory

Re: Support for HB 2228

Date: 02/15/2021

Chairman Patton and Members of the House Judiciary Committee, my name is Ross Capps, Laboratory Director of the Johnson County Sheriff's Office Criminalistics Laboratory (JCSOCL). I am providing testimony on behalf of the JCSOCL in support of HB 2228.

The JCSOCL's partnership in the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) and Kansas Sexual Assault Response Advisory Committee (K-SARAC) has solidified our commitment to ensuring best practice response to sexual assaults in Kansas.

The SAKI working group's 'submit-all-test-all' recommendations for sexual assault kits created an opportunity for the JCSOCL to optimize its examination procedures. Procedural modifications were made to utilize the sensitivity and specificity of the latest DNA technologies, thus providing the most efficient method for examination of sexual assault kits. This streamlining effort has increased the JCSOCL's capacity for examination of sexual assault kits. Additionally, specific and directed goals have led to the JCSOCL's readiness for the influx of sexual assault kits that will follow the adoption of HB 2228.

We believe HB 2228 will provide a sound strategy to prevent the backlog of untested sexual assault kits. This bill will provide uniformity across the state of Kansas, thus providing all victims of sexual assault access to high quality forensic science testing at an accredited laboratory. Adoption of HB 2228 will show Kansas is committed to combating sexual assault and aligning the state with national best practices by prioritizing the collection and submission of sexual assault kits.

Thank you for the opportunity to express the JCSOCL's support for HB 2228. Please contact me in the event you have any questions, concerns, or need additional information.

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