

27232 NW Geary Rd
Garnett, KS 66032
February 8, 2022

Dear Chairman Patton, Ranking Member Carmichael, & House Judiciary Committee Members:

RE: Proponent Testimony – HB 2542 – Creating the Crime of Abuse of a Sports Official

I am the junior class president at Anderson County Junior-Senior High School in Garnett, Kansas. As a student-athlete and a referee, I stand as a proponent of this bill.

The past three years of reffing I have been yelled at, touched, and verbally assaulted reffing even just 5th and 6th grade basketball. I've had parents come on the court and push me as well as coaches poking and grabbing my arm.

As a student-athlete I see players and coaches yell, touch, and attack referees. The amount of refs that are quitting or not returning to reffing is absurd. Even in the past two years I know four other student-athletes my age who have decided to quit reffing because of this treatment.

The way we treat our sports officials isn't just hurting the referee but also hurting sports as a whole. We can't play without them and most of the good ones are gone. Please vote in favor of this bill. Thank You.

Braxton Spencer