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Date: 02/16/2022

TO: Senate of House Transportation Committee

RE: House Bill 2629 --Eliminate Mandatory 90-Day Incarceration Driving on Suspended-

Dear House of Representatives:

I am writing to you to express my support for House Bill 2629 and ask that you support and pass it.

I am the President of the Racial Profiling Citizens Advisory Board of Wichita.

For the past 5 years this board has heard tragic life stories, and life testimonies from Kansans who are trapped in an antiquated unforgiving system. Kansans whose lives have been tragically changed because of their inability to pay and or drive legally. To incarcerate an individual for just trying to provide for his or her family is "inhumane and unusual punishment." We all know that if you cannot pay a fine, you certainly are unable to provide or endure any prolonged incarceration. The label alone, "habitual offender" is criminalizing.

The financial hardship alone can cost you your job, your shelter, your family's stability, your sanity.

I support HB 2629, as it eliminates penalizing the poor for their inability to pay, and **prevents more economic hardship**.

I support HB 2629 and ask that you support it by passing it, because the **current statutes as written**, provide no practical, fair relief, and are punitive.

I support HB 2629, and ask that you support it by passing it because the current statutes have a disparate impact on communities of color,

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and criminalize poor people while also allowing the balancing of the budget and filling our jail cells with people of color, the working poor, and minorities.

In addition, our jails and prisons already represent **mass incarceration of communities of color** which further traps communities and hinders economic stability, and creates barriers and obstacles for "barely making it", families.

This incarceration penalty is not a safety driving-related offense, thus has no public safety justification. Instead, it produces obstacles in front of people seeking to support themselves and their families. Your economic status should not determine your access to justice and ability to make amends!

If we are to restore common sense and fairness to our criminal justice system and turn back unfair overly harsh penalties that destroy those of modest means, "let's begin here!"

Please support HB 2629!

*I'm sure you agree that access to a valid driver's license is **essential** to thousands of Kansans. And unless the revocation is directly connected to a safety driving-related offense, I contend that a 90-day incarceration further vilifies and punishes families that are barely surviving.*

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and I look forward to addressing any questions should you have any.

Sincerely,

Sheila Officer-RPCAB- Chair
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