



Members of the House Committee on Federal and State Affairs:

I am writing to urge you to **oppose HCR 5020**,

For over 135 years, YWCA Northeast Kansas has been committed to building a safe and strong community where women and hard-working Kansas families can thrive. The YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment provides free and confidential services to victims/survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking. This includes the only domestic violence shelter serving Shawnee, Brown, Jackson, and Wabaunsee Counties.

We know, first-hand, that women's experiences of gun violence are inextricably linked to domestic violence. Some 4.5 million women in the U.S. have been threatened with a gun by an intimate partner, and nearly 1 million women alive today have been shot, or shot at, by an intimate partner.¹ In an average month, 50 women in the U.S. are shot to death by intimate partners, and many more are injured.² The presence of a gun in a domestic violence situation makes it five times more likely that a woman will be killed.³

Gun violence is particularly dangerous for women of color, who are nearly three times as likely to be murdered with a gun than white women.⁴ Black women are shot and killed by a husband or intimate partner three times more often than by male strangers, and most often during the course of an argument.⁵

A constitutional amendment, such as the one proposed in HCR 5020, would make it more difficult for law enforcement and social service agencies to protect survivors and prevent gun violence in domestic violence situations – not to mention the potential burden on the legal system. Instead, our legislative focus and attention should be on the ways that we can reduce this threat and support survivors of domestic violence.

YWCA believes that all women and girls deserve to live free from the threat of gun violence.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Marker | CEO

Pronouns: She, her, hers

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4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Fatal Injury Reports, National, Regional and State, 1981-2016." Retrieved from <https://webappa.cdc.gov/sasweb/ncipc/mortrate.html>.
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