

STATE OF KANSAS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STATE CAPITOL
300 S.W. TENTH AVENUE
TOPEKA, KS 66612
(785) 296-7689
nick.hoheisel@house.ks.gov



COMMITTEES:
FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS & PENSIONS
TRANSPORTATION
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NICK HOHEISEL
CHAIRMAN
97TH DISTRICT

Chairwoman Warren, Vice-Chairman Wilborn, Ranking Member Corson, and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding HB 2487, also known as the Good Samaritan Law. I am Representative Nick Hoheisel, representing the 97th District. Beyond my role as a legislator, this legislation holds personal significance for me as someone deeply affected by the issue of drug addiction.

In Sedgwick County, where my district is located, we sadly witnessed over 300 overdose deaths in 2022, emphasizing the critical need for measures to address the addiction crisis. Those 300 lives are just as precious gifts from God as yours and mine. However, I stand before you not just as a representative but as someone with a younger brother currently in an over decade-long battle with substance abuse.

Despite our family's relentless efforts to encourage him to seek help, we have faced many challenges. Every day, I fear that my mother will receive the phone call that countless mothers, including those testifying in favor of this legislation, have experienced. Additionally, I have lost friends to the poison currently infiltrating our communities.

I'm grateful for my co-sponsors and their work on this legislation, as well as Ed Klumpp for his assistance. Securing law enforcement support and addressing their legitimate concerns were vital, and I appreciate their perspective of the growing need for this legislation.

I also want to make clear; this legislation is not a soft approach to crime; it does not condone criminal activities. Rather, it is a pro-life bill that emphasizes the urgency of preserving life. Extending immunity from prosecution to those seeking or providing aid related to controlled substances recognizes the inherent value and dignity in life, even amid drug-related challenges.

Whether it's teenagers experimenting with pills or older individuals struggling with addiction, each life is a precious gift from God deserving preservation.

I emphasize that this legislation does not prevent law enforcement from offering services to individuals. However, the primary objective is to ensure that individuals are alive to seek these services. Lives are at stake, and this legislation is a crucial step toward preserving them.

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While I advocate for more severe punishment for those pushing this poison into our communities and support efforts to control the import and distribution of dangerous substances, immediate action is needed to keep those already addicted alive long enough to seek help.

Kansas is currently one of only two states without Good Samaritan laws covering drug use. Oklahoma recently passed a similar law, and HB 2487 is modeled after it.

I urge the committee to consider the urgent need for this legislation and the potential pro-life impact it can have on our community. Lives saved by this legislation could very well include our loved ones, including my brother.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this vital matter.

Sincerely,

Nick Hoheisel

State Representative, 97th District