

**Testimony in opposition to HB 2295**  
**House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice**  
**Presented by Derek Hein**  
**February 13, 2023**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is Derek Hein and I appear before you today in strong opposition to HB 2295. Most of you know me as a lobbyist who represents a variety of clients and interests here in the Statehouse. I want to be clear that I am not here today expressing the views of those clients, nor the views of my lobbying firm.

This bill has more problems than I am able to properly speak to, but I want to address one major issue, which I have unique perspective on.

In 2015, I opened a men's sober living house in Lawrence, called Solutions. The house has only five beds, but over the past eight years, nearly 100 men have resided in that house. Many of them arrived to us through community corrections, substance abuse treatment facilities, hospitalization, and homelessness. The majority of them reside there while on probation or parole. While some of these gentlemen have done bad things, not a single one of them was a bad person. Addiction tears through the lives of individuals and families and I am so grateful to be positioned to provide those who suffer from it with an opportunity.

To give you a sense of who *some* these men are:

- RF – second resident in the house; opiate addict who, after an overdose, spent several months in jail; this past summer, he graduated with his master's degree in Social Work, making the Dean's List, and now works for a substance abuse treatment facility, helping juveniles.
- KB – was an alcoholic, literally living under a bridge; lost his little girl; came to us in desperate need for help; he became actively involved in his church and community; and now he owns a car, a house, and has full custody of his daughter.
- JB – was facing 7-10 years in prison for drug trafficking; came to us for what was expected to be a month or two while he awaited sentencing; just celebrated one year of sobriety, has been promoted to a management position at his job, and the judge reduced his prison sentence to three years of probation.
- LK – dropped out of college after several run-ins with law enforcement, including fleeing and eluding; had been cut off by his family and attempted suicide on several occasions; two years ago, he graduated from UMKC and lives with his brother and now works in management for large retailer.

This bill turns these *incredible* gentlemen into criminals. Each one of them resided in the house with someone who, at some point, violated probation. In some cases, those violations were clear, but in other cases, they were totally unknown to the other residents.

The purpose of community corrections is to provide accountability and opportunity. The way this bill is written will force people to fail.

I'm grateful this law wasn't in effect when the four men I mentioned above turned their lives around. I suspect their families, churches, and children would agree. I suspect some of these men may not have made it.