



Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault

February 16, 2024

Proponent Testimony: House Bill 2370

Committee: House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice

Dear Chairman Owens and Committee members,

My name is Julie Donelon, and I am the President & CEO at the Metropolitan Organization to Counter Sexual Assault (MOCSA). On behalf of MOCSA, I am providing written testimony in support of House Bill 2370 that defines consent related to sexual offenses.

MOCSA is the rape crisis center serving the greater Kansas City Metropolitan Community, including Johnson and Wyandotte counties in Kansas. Our mission is to improve the lives of those impacted by sexual abuse and assault and to prevent sexual violence in our community. MOCSA provides advocacy and counseling services to individuals and families who have been impacted by sexual violence, and we work to prevent violence through our education, prevention, and outreach programs.

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 2370, which aims to define consent in sexual assault law. I believe that this bill is a crucial step towards preventing and addressing sexual violence.

Sexual assault is a deeply pervasive issue that affects individuals of all genders, ages, and backgrounds. It undermines the autonomy and dignity of survivors, perpetuates cycles of trauma, and creates an atmosphere of fear and mistrust. Last year alone, MOCSA provided support and advocacy to **over 300** individuals in **Kansas** who went to local hospitals for a sexual assault forensic examination following an assault. This was a **26% increase** over the previous year.

We know that to effectively combat sexual violence, we must have clear and enforceable laws that define consent and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. This bill represents a significant advancement in our legal framework by providing a concrete definition of consent that emphasizes the necessity of ongoing and voluntary participation in any sexual activity. By explicitly outlining what constitutes consent, this legislation will help to clarify boundaries, reduce ambiguity, and empower individuals to assert their rights and autonomy in sexual encounters.

Furthermore, defining consent in sexual assault law sends a powerful message to survivors that their experiences are valid, their voices are heard, and their rights are protected. It demonstrates a commitment to creating a society where sexual violence is not tolerated and where survivors are supported and believed.

I urge you to support HB 2370 and to advocate for its swift passage. By enacting this legislation, we can take a significant step towards creating a safer, more just society for all.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

Julie Donelon, MSW
President & CEO

mocsa.org

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