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Representative Stephen Owens, Chair
House Committee on Corrections & Juvenile Justice

Proponent Testimony – SB 419

Chairman Owens and members of the House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill (SB) 419.

SB 419 addresses a gap in our current aggravated endangering a child statute. With the flood of fentanyl into the state, children are being placed in dangerous environments where exposure to a small amount of this drug can result in serious injury or even death. SB 419 provides prosecutors with the ability to charge, if evidence warrants, individuals that knowingly cause or permit children to be in such environments, where fentanyl-related controlled substances are distributed or manufactured.

In 2004, the Kansas Legislature addressed a previous emerging crisis involving the endangerment of children, protecting them from being placed in a methamphetamine distribution or manufacturing environment. This bill, appropriately, adds any fentanyl-related controlled substance to the statute, and reflects this era's drug crisis.

SB 419 also allows for an increased penalty for aggravated child endangerment when bodily harm is inflicted. The current law doesn't account for injury to a child in such an environment.

I appreciate your time and attention and urge you to support passage of SB 419. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time. Thank you.

Jessica G. Domme
Associate Deputy Attorney General
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