

Written PROPONENT testimony for SB 431 Directing the Capitol preservation committee to approve plans for a memorial honoring Emil Joseph Kapaun.

To: Senator Mike Thompson, Chairman
Federal and State Affairs Committee

From: David Mueller, Chairman
Marion County Commission

Date: February 14, 2024

Chairman Thompson and members of the Federal and State Affairs Committee:

Thank you Chairman Thompson and members of the committee for allowing me to provide this written testimony in support of SB 431.

My name is David Mueller, Chairman of the Marion County Commission. Father Kapaun's home town of Pilsen is located in Marion County. His life story of selfless sacrifice for prisoners during the Korean war is an inspiration to us all. It reflects the best of Kansas values and is an encouraging message to people around the world who flock to Pilsen to walk in his steps.

The Catholic Church declared Kapaun a Servant of God in 1993. That step formally launched the cause for possible canonization. He was awarded the Medal of Honor in 2013 for his bravery on the battlefield. His story is unique in the strong devotion of religion and sacrifice to help those who served in the military.

The story of Father Kapaun is more relevant now than ever before. A memorial to recognize this heroic Kansan and tell his story in the Kansas Capitol is an incredible opportunity to share the inspiring story of a native son. I ask the committee to support this private effort to collect funds to memorialize this great Kansan.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer this testimony. Thank you for your consideration.



David Mueller
Chairman, Marion County Commission
200 S. Third, Suite 104
Marion, KS 66861
dmueller@marioncoks.net