

October 1, 2017

Mission

To serve victims and their families while increasing awareness of the traumatic consequences of impaired driving through prevention, education, and community outreach.

Vision

To positively impact social perception of impaired driving, eliminating subsequent serious injury and death, to increase public safety.

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Wichita, KS 67202
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Re: Kansas DUI Impact Center – HB 2104 Support

Dear Sen. Jeff Longbine Chairman & Legislators:

The Kansas DUI Impact Center is a nonprofit organization that has served Kansans statewide since 1987. Our mission is to serve victims of vehicular crimes committed while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. We accomplish our mission in three ways through:

- advocate and support current victims
- prevent future DUI crime by educating offenders convicted of DUI, and
- increase awareness through community outreach in the interest of public safety.

The Kansas DUI Impact Center supports HB 2104 which increases the minimum liability limits and prohibits insurance companies from taking UIM credits leaving policyholders with unpaid medical bills.

Like you, our organization is committed to improving the lives of Kansans. In the past, when our organization has been involved in these hearings a great deal of discussion has been about premiums going up for the increase in liability limits. I would ask this committee to consider our victims and the rising costs they face when someone else chooses to drive drunk and they are injured. Who should bear the costs of those actions? It should not be the victim. It should not be the state when DUI victims turn to Medicaid or other state programs. These costs are being borne by someone. If someone should pay an increased cost, it should be the intoxicated drivers in future insurance premiums due to their risky behaviors.

Also a topic of discussion has been the fear of higher insurance premiums causing more people to drive without insurance. We should not allow the fear of individuals breaking the law to decide what is the right course of action in our state. We have laws that punish people for driving intoxicated, we should not relax those laws for fear of people breaking them. Instead, we should enforce the laws that are in the best interests of our citizens. Passing this bill is in the best interest of our citizens.

Last year in Kansas alone, there were 2,211 alcohol related motor vehicle crashes, 389 of them happened in Sedgwick County, resulting in 34 Kansans killed in alcohol related crashes (reported the Kansas Department of Transportation). Between 2012-2016, Kansas has had 705 fatalities which impaired driving has been a factor.

As a Victim Advocate at the Kansas DUI Impact Center, I have worked

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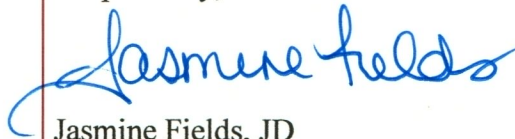
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individually with victims and their families, some with property damage, others with serious injuries, and many who have lost someone they loved. They all become a member of a club they did not apply for, nor wanted to belong to. I hear the stories of the medical bills piling up, going back to work before recovery is complete, and simply wanting to give up because they see no way out. HB2104 will help the victims that step into my office feel like there is one less thing, they have to worry about.

On Monday, December 11, 2017, our agency will hold our 28th Candlelight Vigil for over 230 Kansans to memorialize loved ones seriously injured, or killed by impaired drivers. Annually, myself and other Kansas DUI Impact Center staff provide thousands of direct victim services such as: support group, victim advocacy, case coordination, and crisis management to Kansans overwhelmed by impaired drivers. On behalf of those DUI and survivors, I am respectfully request your support in serving members of our community whose financial stability, physical health, and emotional wellbeing have been devastated by tragic DUI crashes through requiring underinsured motorist coverage policies to pay out policy limits.

Each time we travel our roadways we are at risk of victimization, impaired driving affects us all. Your support of HB 2104 initiates an exponentially positive effect on those unexpected victims to focus on recovery instead of medical bills. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Respectfully,



Jasmine Fields, JD
Victim Advocate

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Organization Background

The Kansas DUI Impact Center was founded 30 years ago as the DUI Victim Center of Kansas in Wichita, Kansas and has since focused on providing direct services to all victims of vehicular crime committed under the influence of drugs and alcohol, educating DUI offenders, and increasing awareness through community outreach in the interest of public safety. We are a very small organization with two (2) regular staff members and an intern usually studying in the field of criminal justice, forensics, or sociology and psychology. We are heavily reliant on volunteers, with about 100 active volunteers who are the heartbeat of our organization and give selflessly to those in need.

In summary, our Victim Advocates provide direct victim support through support groups, visitation in home or hospital, with wellness correspondence calls, emails, cards, letters to victims to help them through their recovery process, court accompaniment and assistance navigating our judicial process, case tracking and monitoring, transportation and childcare for court appearances to hundreds of victims annually. Our volunteers assist advocates with many of these functions, and also speak in public forum statewide about their personal DUI fatality or serious injury crashes in the interest of prevention and education in schools across Kansas. Our school based DUI education and prevention programs are critical in creating positive awareness of under-age drinking and impaired driving within the next generation. We hold DUI victim panels for educating offenders convicted of DUI, as well as minors in possession or consumption of alcohol, referred to our agency by courts all over the state.

Agency Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DAVxFDNIP9g>

The Kansas DUI Impact Center lost one of his most dedicated volunteers, Board Member and Survivor in May 2017. As an agency we make sure that the memory of Dominique Green and Adrian Crosby stay alive. Avis was instrumental on changing the victim notification policy. Because of her advocacy efforts legislature enacted the Adrian Olajuwon Crosby and Dominique Nathaniel Tyree Green's Law. Read more at <http://www.kansas.com/news/politics-government/article1138294.html>

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