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Written Testimony to the Kansas State Senate Judiciary Committee
Kansas State Capitol Building, Room 346-S
Topeka, KS 66612

Support SB 157
Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am the daddy of 2 wonderful children and I currently have slightly over guideline time in accordance to the guidelines of Shawnee County. That means a roughly 85/15 split in time which translates to me going half the days each month without seeing my children while me ex only goes 2 days without seeing them and with me only getting 4 overnights a month. I have always been actively involved in my children's lives and have never done anything to deserve this, let alone my children. They deserve better and to be able to see their daddy just as much as their mommy.

I support equal shared parenting and SB 157. Had I been treated as an equal from the beginning, my divorce would have been much less contentious and I feel that it would be over already. Divorce impacts the time each parent is able to spend with their children but the impact of the divorce should be minimized by allowing each parent as much time as possible to be with their children.

There are numerous studies that have shown empirically that equal shared parenting is the best thing that we can do for children going through divorce. Spending time with the ones that they know and love help them cope with what is going on. No amount of monetary child support can replace a child's time spent with their mother and father. The polls consistently show public support for equal shared parenting as well. The grand majority of people favor treating both parents equally in a divorce case. So much so that almost half of the States in the United States considered shared parenting legislation last year and are seeking it again this year.

In Shawnee County, for example, the guidelines note the importance of maximizing the children's time with each parent (thus 50/50), though it is rarely ordered. It is a well-known fact that children need both parents. Each child has a special and distinct relationship with each parent. A separate, but equally important bond. But the question remains, why is the law not changing given that there is tangible evidence of the importance of shared parenting?

The time has come to make a difference which is why I have written this testimony. To share a little of my story and show my support for SB 157. In conclusion, it is common sense that children need their mothers and fathers. Shared parenting is supported by current research and has the public support. I ask that the members of this committee please vote in favor of passing SB 157 for the children of Kansas. To give them a future and hope during what is undoubtedly one of the hardest times in their lives. I would also like to give a special thanks to Senators Wagle and Longbine for supporting this bill.

Respectfully,
Gavin Edwards