

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2473

House Committee on the Judiciary

January 18th, 2022

Chairman Patton and Members of the Committee:

K.S.A. 20-3217(b) requires that all district court judges (other than in Sedgwick and Johnson Counties) serve on the county law library board of trustees. There are six district court judges in Douglas County who all serve on the Douglas County Law Library Board of Trustees.

The purpose of this legislative change is to remove the requirement that all district court judges in Douglas County serve on the Law Library Board. This amendment would allow two district court judges to serve on the Law Library Board instead of all six. The amendment would also remove the requirement that attorney members of the Law Library Board be selected in an election every two years by a majority of the attorneys in the county. The suggested change is consistent with the rules that currently only apply to the Johnson and Sedgwick County Law Libraries.

The Michael J. Malone Law Library is an important resource for the general public and the legal community in Douglas County; however, it is not a large or complicated operation. The Law Library provides access to legal materials and has four computers and one laptop computer for legal research. There is one-part time employee. It is not necessary to involve all six district court judges in decisions about the operation of the Law Library. Likewise, it is not a good use of resources to conduct an election every two years to select the attorney board members.

Many counties are not impacted by this change because they either do not have a law library or they do not have more than two district court judges in that county. The goal of the legislation is not to single out Douglas County. It is simply to make the change as limited as possible so that it does not impact counties that prefer the status quo for their county law library.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Mark Simpson
District Court Judge
7th Judicial District