

January 20, 2024

Dear Member of the Kansas Legislature,

I write to you today as the mother who has lost a child due to the poisoning of illicit fentanyl. My son took the counterfeit pill and lost his life on September 7, 2022. I also lost my niece on February 20, 2022. My niece was an addict, but her drug of choice was not fentanyl. I have learned through the loss of my son and niece that illicit fentanyl is taking the lives of more than 150 Americans every day and that number continues to grow. It has become the leading cause of death among Americans between the ages of 18-45. It is also becoming the largest growth of death rate for our youth here in America. That age is from 14-23.

I know you have heard all of the statistics, and you have heard so many sad stories from those of us who have lost loved ones. And we hear of all that our local official, state representatives and senators are doing to fight fentanyl. And we parents are trying to help by getting the awareness out in our own communities as much as possible. But what we are trying to do today is we are trying to get the "Good Samaritan" law updated. We need it to be updated so that anyone in any situation can feel comfortable calling and getting the person that has been given fentanyl help. So that no other families have to go through what myself and other families have gone through.

We thank you all for your time and thank you for listening to our stories. Please take the time to consider how this law can and will save so many lives and give so many people a second chance at life. And think how many of those people might be alive to share their story so that others don't make the bad choices they made. And if you don't think that fentanyl will not affect you your mistaken because fentanyl affects everyone eventually if we sit around and do nothing.

Thank you

Sincerely,

Shannon Earnshaw