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TO: Senate Judiciary Committee

FROM: Kansas Judicial Council – Nancy Strouse

DATE: March 13, 2023

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 2131 Amending K.S.A. 20-2203 Regarding the Mission of the Judicial Council

The Kansas Judicial Council recommends HB 2131 amending K.S.A. 20-2203 regarding the Judicial Council's mission. This amendment is not intended to result in any substantive change to the Judicial Council's functions or activities. It is simply a clean-up type of amendment to more accurately reflect the Judicial Council's current mission and purpose.

The Legislature created the Judicial Council in 1927, long before Kansas courts were unified under the administrative authority of the Supreme Court. One of the Judicial Council's original duties was to study and survey the state's judicial department and collect statistics regarding the numbers and types of cases filed in each court and the length of time elapsing between case initiation and conclusion. This was information the Legislature needed to help determine what could be done to improve the administration of justice in the state. However, the task of collecting and reporting case statistics was taken over long ago by the Judicial Branch's Office of Judicial Administration, and the original language in K.S.A. 20-2203 does not accurately reflect the Judicial Council's current mission.

The Judicial Council requests that the language in the first sentence of K.S.A. 20-2203 be amended to replace the outdated duty to study and survey the Judicial Branch with a more accurate description of the Council's broader mission to study the overall system of the administration of justice and make recommendations for improvements.