

To the Kansas House Judiciary Committee,

I want to first thank you for the opportunity to speak and for taking the time to consider this vital proposal.

My name is Seth Dewey and I work for the Reno County Health Dept. I work in Health Education specifically with Substance Misuse serving as the project coordinator for our grants dealing with substance use. We have worked tirelessly with multiple partners from all backgrounds from school districts to law enforcement. From medical professionals and EMS to the business and industry sector. We have realized that while our community coalition work has had success we also know that there is more to be done. Locally and statewide.

258, 258 is the number of Kansans we lost to overdose in 2019. This is taken from the KDHEs website on Mortality data. This is also only from January to September of 2019. So we know those numbers in actuality are higher. If people felt safer calling 911 in the event of an overdose who knows how many lives could have been saved. And in actuality, even if it would have been just one wouldn't it have been worth it? Another area we could benefit from this proposal is more calls to 911 not only increases the chances of saving lives but it also will help us to get more data on overdoses, ED visits, and substance trends that can assist those in public health and coalition work to be able to keep up with this ever changing work and refocus prevention, education, and treatment strategies through out the state.

I ask that we all keep in mind the premise that underlies good Samaritan laws. Its origins of course being traced back to the ancient biblical parable, ultimately yielding the definition of a good Samaritan as an individual who intervenes to assist another individual without prior notion, responsibility or promise of compensation. This presents us with an issue to consider with grave seriousness. We encourage and applaud the ones that take quick action to save a life. We see the stories on the news and on social media. Ones that call 911 in the event of an overdose are making the right call, the morally right call. It is unfortunate when fear of prosecution or reprisal would make a person question the morally right decision.

As I already stated my name is Seth Dewey. And I am also a person in long term recovery. What that looks like for me is I haven't felt the need to use any mind altering substances or alcohol since July 23rd of 2017. Since that time I have attended more funerals than I have previously in my entire life. I have talked to so many parents and family members that have tried so hard to come to terms with the loss of their loved ones knowing that they passed away alone. Wondering if they could have been saved somehow.

In conclusion I want to thank you all again for all you do and in hearing this. Please know that HB 2365 WILL save lives. It WILL help us collect vital data and information that we can use in prevention and education work. And it WILL be another step in tearing down some of the stigma that continually puts up barriers between PWUD (People Who Use Drugs) and those trying to help.

Respectfully,

Seth Dewey