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Testimony in support of House Bill 2079

**Presented to the Senate Committee on Ways & Means
By Michelle McCormick, Director of Victim Services
March 24, 2021**

Chairman Billinger and Members of the Committee:

My name is Michelle McCormick and I am the director of the Victim Services Division for Kansas Attorney General Derek Schmidt and the state Victims' Rights Coordinator, a position created by statute under the attorney general's jurisdiction since 1989. On behalf of General Schmidt, I want to thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony in support of House Bill 2079. This proposed bill is a joint effort between the Office of the Attorney General and Secretary of State Scott Schwab.

My testimony addresses Sections 13-20 of the bill, which proposes the transferring of the address confidentiality program, commonly known as "Safe at Home," from the Secretary of State to the Attorney General. This program allows victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking or stalking to enroll in a program to provide an address that he or she may use to receive U.S. mail or service of process. The Secretary of State maintains a confidential list of the actual address where the participant is residing and forwards the mail received to the participant. This program has been housed within the Secretary of State's Office since it was created in 2006.

In conversations with Secretary Schwab and his staff, we believe this program would be a better fit within the attorney general's office. If this bill were to pass, we would house the program within the Victim Services Division, where our specialized staff work with victims of crime every day.

Our office is in regular contact with many domestic violence shelters and victim advocacy organizations around the state, who are among the groups that assist victims with signing up for the Safe at Home program. So, again, we believe this program will be a good fit with the existing services provided by our Victim Services Division.

Thank you again for your consideration of House Bill 2079.

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