

Prepared Testimony of Missey Smith

Mother of Kelsey Smith

In Support of HB 2782

February 15, 2024



In Memory of Kelsey

Chair Humphries, Vice Chair Maughan, Ranking Minority Highberger, and members of the Committee:

My name is Missey Smith, I am the mother of Kelsey Smith who was brutally murdered in 2007. I am testifying in support of HB 2782. Kansas needs to be able to complete the judicial process that is in place, and this will allow for that to occur.

There are very few times that a defendant can be charged with capital murder and that is the way it should be. Many times, legislators are shown pictures of a victim, and it shows them as they were when they were alive. Maybe you should be shown the pictures of what they went through. Many of us as survivors of homicide have those images and scenarios in our head for the rest of our lives. For instance, my daughter was kidnapped in her own car from a Target store in Overland Park, at gun point. She was then taken to a wooded area across state lines into Missouri. She was brutally raped, sodomized and then strangled to death with her own belt. These words are not easy for me to write, and I write them with a shortness of breath and tears in my eyes. My child that I gave birth to went through hell that day. Her murderer later confessed that he promised her he would let her go if she would cooperate with him. Evidence then showed that he would choke her out with her belt during her sexual assault and then bring her back to consciousness, and then repeated the assaults.

Images that I have of her are of her neck where he strangled her multiple times and pulled the belt so tight, he cut her. Her fingers were covered in abrasions from fighting so hard trying to pull that belt from around her neck. When burying her in her prom dress she had to have a turtleneck on to cover her wounds. Now look at her image and imagine that.

Her murderer was charged with capital murder and after fourteen months he plead guilty to all charges. WHY? So he did not face the same sentence, he gave her.

As you have been made aware there is a shortage of the drugs needed to carry out the sentence and this bill alleviates that issue. It will allow for the sentences to be carried out and bring some resolution to these families. I strongly urge you to pass this bill out of committee.

Thank you,

Missey Smith

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