



February 11, 2025

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Kansas Appleseed Center for Law and Justice  
Written Testimony in Support of HB 2228  
House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice

Chair Lewis, Vice Chair Resman, Ranking Member Schlingensiepen, and Members of the House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of House Bill 2228, which would require the secretary of corrections to assist inmates with obtaining identification and employment related documentation prior to release from custody.

Kansas Appleseed has a long history advocating for a Kansas where everyone has the resources they need to flourish, raise healthy families, participate fully in their communities, and benefit from fair and effective systems of justice. HB 2228 takes a step towards fulfilling this by providing the support an incarcerated person needs to prepare for their transition out of a correctional facility.

Nationally, each year more than 600,000 individuals leave incarceration and attempt to transition back to their lives by finding housing, seeking employment, and accessing services and other necessities for safely and effectively returning to society; these efforts face significant barriers without proper identification<sup>1</sup>.

The United States Department of Justice agrees documentation is a key component to effective and safe reentry, reiterating that, “[those] leaving correctional facilities face extreme challenges securing employment and housing, registering for school, opening bank accounts, and accessing other benefits, such as health care, that are critical to successful integration.”<sup>2</sup> In their Roadmap Reentry, the Department of Justice presents five core principles for this impactful time of transition; one of which focuses on the importance of providing comprehensive reentry-related information and access to resources necessary to succeed in the community<sup>3</sup>.

Identification and documentation are vital tools that reduce recidivism and increase the likelihood of success. Previously incarcerated Kansans deserve the opportunity to become thriving community members who are able to contribute to society, and establish families and lives beyond their justice system involvement. While we would appreciate the addition of requirements regarding benefits applications for resources such as medicaid and the SNAP

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<sup>1</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures. Providing Identification for Those Released from Incarceration." National Conference of State Legislatures, 2024.

<https://www.ncsl.org/civil-and-criminal-justice/providing-identification-for-those-released-from-incarceration>.

<sup>2</sup> The Department of Justice. *Prison Reform: Reducing Recidivism by Strengthening the Federal Bureau of Prisons*, Department of Justice Archive, 2023. <https://www.justice.gov/archives/prison-reform#recentandongoingreforms>.

<sup>3</sup> The Department of Justice *Roadmap to Reentry*, The Attorney General’s Reentry Initiative, April 19, 2017, <https://www.justice.gov/archives/reentry/roadmap-reentry>.

food assistance program to further set those transitioning out of incarceration up for success, HB 2228 provides a strong foundational first step towards more positive outcomes within our justice system.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 2228, and join the twenty-one states who have enacted similar legislation supporting access to documentation for those transitioning out of incarceration, including our neighbors Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas<sup>4</sup>.

Thank you for your time,

Brenna Visocsky

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<sup>4</sup> National Conference of State Legislatures. Providing Identification for Those Released from Incarceration." National Conference of State Legislatures, 2024.  
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