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Honorable Beverly Gossage
Chair, Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare
Kansas Capitol, Room 548 South

Re: Oral/Written PROPONENT testimony, SB 390

Dear Chairwoman Gossage and Committee:

My name is William Mize and I operate a law practice in Overland Park. I am writing to urge your support for passage of SB 390.

SB 390 addresses many gaps in current law that would protect Kansans from discrimination for their vaccine beliefs and equally important, it provides for enforcement with a private cause of action. While the legislature passed legislation in the fall of 2021 to protect employees from discharge for failing to submit to Covid injections, employees still tell me of employers who demand that submit to other vaccines, like influenza or various childhood vaccines, to keep their job. This bill recognizes that employee exemptions should not be limited just to covid vaccines and will provide needed protection for Kansas employees whose exemption applies to all vaccinations.

I have also heard from students who have been barred from their college pursuits because schools demand various vaccinations. Usually, this demand comes from hospitals that provide training to nursing students and the hospitals will not honor exemptions by the students. This bill will address this policy to require the colleges to honor student exemptions so they can attend school.

Additionally, parents of young children are being impacted because daycare providers have not honored their religious exemption. While some of these facilities may have denied exemptions on their own, it appears that the KDHE has promoted in this decision. For instance, this week a parent of a daycare child advises that the KDHE told the daycare facility that, even though he submitted a religious exemption in the wording of the statutory exemption, the religious exemption was not valid for all the required vaccines and, further, that verification from the parents' minister was needed for such an exemption to be considered. This obviously misstates the law and would indicate an agency that is ignoring the law to push an agenda. This legislation will provide these parents the power to resist such efforts to deny exemptions.

For the foregoing reasons, I ask you to pass SB 390 favorably out of this committee.

Respectfully,
William D. Mize
Overland Park, Kansas