



March 24, 2021

Memo for the SUPPORT of Bill Number: HB2422

To: Chair Rep. John Barker, Vice Chair Rep. Francis Awerkamp, Ranking Minority Member Rep. Louis Ruiz, Members Rep. Tory Marie Arnberger, Rep. Jesse Burris, Rep. Blake Carpenter, Rep. Stephanie Clayton, Rep. John Eplee, Rep. Renee Erickson, Rep. Broderick Henderson, Rep. Dennis "Boog" Highberger, Rep. Michael Houser, Rep. Susan Humphries, Rep. Trevor Jacobs, Rep. Jim Karleskint, Rep. Jan Kessinger, Rep. Nancy Lusk, Rep. Les Mason, Rep. John Resman, Rep. Eric L. Smith, Rep. Jerry Stogsdill, Rep. Adam Thomas, Rep. Brandon Woodard

I testify today as an individual citizen, business owner, disabled veteran, mother of a Down Syndrome child and as a Small Business Association (SBA) Leadership Council Representative. My testimony is simple - Washington politics are finally aligning with social justice and I implore Kansas Legislature to integrate those same alignments with the implementation of **HB2422**, the bill to end child marriage in Kansas.

I am from the Washington D.C. area and work tirelessly and passionately to advocate on behalf of special needs children, a forgotten niche within the most vulnerable population (yes, they, too, can be coerced into marriage). **HB2422** does not just protect underage children, but also protects minors who might otherwise be incapable of distinguishing subpar adult motives.

You are not alone in standing up for basic human rights! The good news is that here, in Washington, underage marriage and the general plight against pedophilia, is no longer unnoticed or taboo. I have seen the great bi-partisan

strides being made to end these atrocities, including support from the private sector. We need courage on both sides of the aisle, and to listen when the people speak up about issues that matter, like preventing underage marriage and protecting our children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Ms. Joreida Torres

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SBA Leadership Council

American Legion Post 2001 First Vice Commander

Published Author (The Down Syndrome Superhero)

Unchained At Last Coalition Member

Former Discovery Veterans Group (DVG) President

Former Wounded Warriors and DVG Liaison