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## Misdemeanor Prosecution Decision Must Be Resolved

Topeka, KS, September 15, 2011 – The funding battle over who will pay to prosecute domestic violence misdemeanors in Shawnee County and the City of Topeka is very disturbing. While we understand that funding is tight everywhere, using domestic violence prosecution as a football to toss back and forth is unacceptable. The City and the County must resolve this issue immediately. KCSDV is not taking a position about who can or will do a better job of prosecution. What KCSDV will say, however, is that anyone who believes that a “misdemeanor” is not a serious case must reconsider that notion as it applies to domestic violence.

Many, many serious and lethal domestic violence cases start at this level. Nothing about a domestic violence misdemeanor crime should be minimized or taken lightly. Victims rely on the criminal system to hold the abuser accountable and to protect them from further harm. This vacuum in the process is a violation of the trust in the system that victims have a right to rely upon.

KCSDV will work with the YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment, the program serving victims of sexual and domestic violence in Topeka and Shawnee County, to assure that best practice training and information is provided to whichever entity prosecutes these cases. However, releasing violent offenders is unacceptable. KCSDV urges the City and County to resolve this issue immediately before someone is seriously injured or killed.

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*Founded in 1982, the purpose of KCSDV is the prevention and elimination of sexual and domestic violence through a statewide network of programs providing support and safety for all victims of sexual and domestic violence and stalking, with primary focus on women and their children; direct services; public awareness and education; advocacy for victims; comprehensive prevention; and, social change efforts. Learn more at [www.kcsdv.org](http://www.kcsdv.org).*