

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by Section 11 of Article VI of the Oklahoma Constitution, I have vetoed Enrolled House Bill 4342.

In 2024, I vetoed this exact bill, then titled Senate Bill 1557.

Domestic violence will continue to be prosecuted seriously in Oklahoma. This veto does not change that. By allowing prosecutors to use prior conduct to suggest a defendant is guilty of the crime charged, however, this bill departs from the basic presumption of innocence. A person should be convicted based on proof of the specific offense alleged, not based on past accusations.

The bill's broad definition of domestic violence or abuse, including psychological, economic, and emotional abuse, could also be stretched to treat ordinary relationship conflict, harsh words, or financial disagreements as evidence of abuse. That would distract juries from the specific charge before them.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Enrolled House Bill 4342.