



Representative Susan Humphries
House Judiciary Committee
Re: Support of HB 2557

Dear Chair Humphries and the House Judiciary Committee:

My name is Steve Kearney and I writing in my capacity as the Executive Vice President of the Kansas State Troopers Association. Founded in 1979, The KSTA is a professional organization of Kansas State Highway Patrol Troopers, Kansas Motor Carrier Inspectors, and Capitol Police. The mission of the KSTA is to foster, protect, and promote the welfare, safety, and work-related interests of Kansas Highway Patrol Troopers and to encourage and promote the constant improvement of public service by the KHP.

The KSTA stands in strong support of HB 2557. By expanding the definition of “peer support counseling session” under the Rules of Evidence, this bill would further encourage emergency responders to seek out counseling services without fear of future statements at such sessions being introduced into future court proceedings.

Confidentiality in peer support counseling sessions is of paramount importance when encouraging law enforcement and first responders to utilize these services. Such services have proven to be an effective tool when treating post-traumatic stress disorder or other mental health treatment needs created by the high stress careers of our officers in uniform. Confidence in such services can be expanded if our Troopers know that statements made in such sessions cannot and will not be used in future court proceedings.

We ask that you join us in our support of HB 2557 and pass it favorably. I will stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Sincerely,

Steve Kearney
Executive Vice President
Kansas State Troopers Association
(785) 640-2226
steve@kearneyandassociates.com