

Kansas Peace Officers' Association



INCORPORATED

TELEPHONE 316-722-8433

www.kpoa.org kpoa@kpoa.org

P.O. Box 2592 · WICHITA, KANSAS 67201

Support for House Bill 2052 as Introduced

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Chairman Kessler and Committee Members,

As President of the Kansas Peace Officer Association, I am privileged to represent over 3,000 active law enforcement members from across the state in support for House Bill 2052, as introduced. Our support is primarily focused on Section 5 of the bill addressing a troubling trend of unreasonable restrictions placed on off-duty law enforcement officers who are carrying concealed at public venues.

It is without contest that the more well-trained and prepared law enforcement officers in one area the safer that area is. Regardless of the location, when community safety is threatened, communities demand more law enforcement presence. Section 5 of the bill simply provides a means for more trained and prepared law enforcement to be on-site within our communities when bad things happen. This is generally at venues often targeted by those looking to cause the most disruption and even high body counts through active violence.

Experience tells us that "Active Shooters" look to venues where they can create the most havoc, in the fastest time, with little to no contact with law enforcement. We also know that the faster law enforcement arrives on scene and engages the suspect, the faster the situation is resolved and more lives are saved. Section 5 allows us to have armed officers on scene at these venues without being subjected to unnecessary, intrusive, and dangerous practices.

Officers should not be required to alter their plans to take special entrances or complete unnecessary security information forms that disseminate their personal information unnecessarily. They certainly shouldn't be required to be marked, always in a highly visible manner, to identify them as an officer or as an armed person. This is dangerous for them and their families. It essentially targets them first and foremost should an assailant choose to do violence in that venue. Even if acts of violence are not intended, these highly visible markings have resulted in off-duty officers being the targets of malicious acts like rude comments, thrown items, and even damage to personal property and vehicles.

Imagine being a professional that is not allowed the opportunity to protect his or her family, friends, and fellow citizens because of short sightedness and red tape. These challenges may be enough incentive to make a quality officer leave his or her off-duty weapon at home that could have saved lives had he or she had it with them. We must remove this hinderance from solid professionals being able to protect their communities from the worst of the worst. We encourage to you pass HB 2052.

Thank you,

Tim Greenwood, President