



Kansas Sheriffs' Association

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Neutral Testimony to House Committee on Federal and State Affairs In Support of HB2378

February 17, 2025

Chairman Kessler and Committee Members:

The Kansas Sheriffs Association provides the following insights on HB2378. The problem of squatters has become a nationwide problem. While there is a Kansas law on how abandoned property can be claimed by someone after years of taking care of it, we do not have a clear law on squatters during that time period.

There are some technical things in the bill in sections 2-5 around the requirements of the Sheriff that we would like to see addressed:

Section 2:

1. In subsection (a), page 1 lines 18-21, we believe it should be clarified the affidavit must be notarized.
2. In subsection (b), starting on page 1, line 32, consider adding a definition of “immediate family member.” Some samples from statute include: KSA 21-5427 subsection (f)(5); KSA 21-5926 subsection (f); and KSA 50-676 subsection (c).

Section 3:

1. In subsection (c) on page 2, lines 12-14, you might want to add “criminal damage to property” to the list. We realize it is already covered by the catchall phrase “or any other criminal act” but this will be a common crime we find in these cases.

Section 4:

1. Should subsection (b) be in Section 2, instead of this section?

Section 5:

1. The correct term on page 2 line 26 is “county sheriff’s office,” not “department.”
2. We would like the phrase on page 2, lines 26, be changed to “No county sheriff or their deputies or employees. . .” This is because the way this works is the lawsuit is filed against the sheriff and the individual deputies or employees of the sheriff.

We also believe there should be further discussion about whether judicial review should take place and what the owner does if the person still refuses to vacate the property. We assume the intent is the normal eviction process would be used. But that is not clear.

Sheriff Jeffrey Easter, Sedgwick County
Legislative Committee Chair