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Proponent Testimony to the
Senate Committee on Utilities
House Bill No. 2109
Jeremy Noel, Vice-President
Kansas State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police
April 5, 2025

Chair Fagg and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 2109.

My name is Jeremy Noel, and I am a deputy with the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office. I am currently in my 24th year of service as a career law enforcement officer. Today, I testify in my capacity as Vice President of the Kansas State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police, which represents more than 4,200 law enforcement officers across Kansas.

Utility poles can currently be used to deploy technology with a pole cam attachment agreement. The bill is needed to address utility companies' concerns surrounding potential liability for pole cam installation of law enforcement equipment on poles located within the public right-of-way. The purpose of the bill is to exempt public utilities from civil liability of the pole camera on a utility pole under the Kansas Tort Claims Act.

Technology deployed on utility poles is an invaluable tool for law enforcement, serving as a cost-effective force multiplier that enhances public safety and strengthens agencies' ability to monitor high-crime areas. This type of equipment provides law enforcement with real-time information, improving situational awareness and allowing for a more efficient allocation of resources.

Additionally, this technology plays a crucial role in managing large-scale outdoor events that draw thousands of attendees, presenting unique challenges in crowd safety and security. Utility-mounted equipment can be rapidly deployed to monitor stolen vehicles, violent crime areas, and large-scale drug operations. They also support police response efforts in real time, ensuring the safety of first responders.

The ability to utilize existing infrastructure for these public safety purposes represents a fiscally responsible approach to enhancing law enforcement capabilities while minimizing additional costs to taxpayers. For these reasons, we strongly support the passage of House Bill 2109.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am happy to answer any questions at the appropriate time.