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**Testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
In Support of HB2154
February 10, 2021**

Chairman Patton and Committee Members,

Our associations support HB2154. This bill is about protection of our children. The purpose of the stop arm laws is to provide safe entry and exit of our children using the school buses. It was alarming to see the number of violations occurring across the state reflected in the survey data.

The school bus survey shows over 1,000 violations of this law are occurring per day. Last year we warned it was only a matter of time until we have a disaster like other states have seen. Unfortunately, that prediction became true when a 7-year-old Abilene girl was killed when struck by a car while crossing a road to board a school bus.

A news report of the Abilene fatality also noted “Nationwide, most fatalities involving students waiting or leaving a school bus occur in rural areas, according to the [2018-2019 National School Bus Loading and Unloading Survey](#). In the past five school years, 22 out of the 30 deaths, or about 73%, were students ages 10 and under.”¹

Active on view enforcement of this violation is difficult. Much of the transportation of our children to and from schools occurs at times of high call loads and at the same times school zone speed enforcement is needed. Enforcement largely relies on us to simply be in the right place at the right time. We can, and do, conduct special enforcement operations for these violations. That may be an officer following a school bus along its route, or it may include an officer riding on the bus and notifying other officers who stop the offender. Either way it is spotty enforcement at best. This bill would provide a consistent enforcement platform. There is no question consistent enforcement will result in reduced violations and increased safety for our children. The camera enforcement program in this bill offers an efficient system for such enforcement.

Law enforcement agencies and traffic safety organizations conduct educational awareness programs attempting to achieve voluntary compliance with the stop arm laws.

The Chiefs and Sheriffs Association participated in the study group that brought you this bill. We understand the magnitude of the change in policy required in this bill. But we also believe the proper safeguards are in the bill to assure fairness and due process.

We urge you to move HB2154 forward favorably.

Ed Klumpp
Legislative Liaison

¹ Wichita Eagle: <https://www.kansas.com/news/state/article245600725.html>