

**Testimony to the House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee
In Support of HB2648
February 14, 2018**

Chairman Jennings and Committee Members,

I am presenting this testimony on behalf of the Kansas City chapter of the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association (FLEOA). The Kansas City chapter supports HB2648 which rectifies the omission of federal law enforcement officers in the existing law. Passage of HB2648 insures that justice will be served on those wishing to do harm on all law enforcement officers in Kansas.

My name is Zac Howard. I have spent the last 14 years devoting my life to serving as a federal law enforcement officer; first in Chicago; then on the US/Mexico border; and now in the great state of Kansas as a Deputy United States Marshal assigned to the Kansas Fugitive Apprehension Task Force. Our job is not easy. We are specifically tasked with arresting federal, state, and local fugitives. This type of work has the potential to be extremely dangerous, but it's a profession that myself and our team have voluntarily signed on to do. And we make that choice daily.

As a member of the task force, I have been involved in numerous altercations and significant incidents in which a violent fugitive wished to do the team harm. One such example involved the arrest of a homicide suspect accused of brutally murdering his girlfriend. Upon entry into the residence, myself and the team were fired upon by the fugitive. He continued shooting at us throughout the evening until he eventually surrendered.

As I sit here today, I can assure you that the fugitive that was firing the shots did not know, nor did he care, who signed my paycheck. He considered me a law enforcement officer. His sole purpose was to end my life. When I enter a house with my fellow officers beside me, I am not concerned about whether they are federal, state, or local law enforcement officers. I view them as fellow team members; law enforcement officers with the same common goal as mine, to rid the streets of violent fugitives.

We as a FLEOA chapter, and I as a federal law enforcement officer, believe the amendments offered will make the changes needed to Kansas state law to ensure the crime of assault on a law enforcement officer does not exclude those working for a federal agency. Thank you for your time.

Zac Howard
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