



Kansas Sheriffs' Association

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Testimony to the Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice Opponent to HB 2474 Offender Registration Act February 4, 2020

Chairman Jennings and Committee Members,

The Kansas Sheriff's Association submits testimony as an opponent of HB 2474.

The KSA does not support any part of this bill. Listed below are some of the reasons why we are opposed.

- 1) The bill allows court to determine offender's ability to pay the fee and waive registration fees.
- 2) The bill changes the penalty for harboring, concealing, or aiding a person from apprehension or prosecution for not complying with registration from a SL5 person felony to a SL8 nonperson felony. It also changes failure to register from a felony to a C misdemeanor if the registration violation is a misdemeanor.
- 3) The bill changes the non-aggravated violation of offender registry by extending the period required before it becomes a crime from 30 days to 90 days.
- 4) The bill changes aggravated violation of offender registry act from an act continuing for 180 days to an act that continues for one year or more, or by a person with two prior aggravated violations, and removes (does not amend) the provision that a new violation is committed every 180 days.
- 5) The bill reduces the severity level of a non-aggravated violation from a SL6 felony to a SL8 nonperson felony with presumptive imprisonment if the crime requiring registration was a felony. If the crime was a misdemeanor then it is reduced to a Class A misdemeanor.
- 6) The bill reduces failure to pay registration fee from a SL9 felony for failure to pay over 15 days and a Class A misdemeanor for failure to pay for less than 15 days to a Class C misdemeanor regardless of the time period.
- 7) Eliminates the payment of the registration fee for juveniles.

The KSA believes all of these changes are very problematic. It is our believe that the reduction of time periods is reducing the accountability of a registrant and gives them more opportunity for more violations to be committed without consequences.

We also believe reducing felony crimes to misdemeanor crimes has two issues. First, most of the registrants are there because of violent or sexual in nature crimes that they committed. To make these misdemeanors is a public safety concern. Second, if these violations become misdemeanors, if convicted, will they spend their time in county jails? If so, this appears to be just another attempt in shirking the State of Kansas' responsibility to house prisoners and placing that responsibility back onto local sheriff's.

The Kansas Sheriff's Association asks the committee to absolutely consider these changes and how the changes could affect victims of these crimes and future victims. The KSA is strong opponent of this bill as written.

We thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

Sheriff Jeffrey T. Easter
Legislative Chair for the Kansas Sheriff's Association