



Kansas State Lodge

Fraternal Order of Police

Testimony to the
House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice
Senate Bill 45
Mik Shanks, President Kansas State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police
Testifying in Favor of Passage
March 11, 2020

Chairman Jennings and members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing my written testimony to be entered into the record in support of Senate Bill 45. My name is Mik Shanks and I am the President of the Kansas State Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police. On behalf of the 3,800 members of the largest fraternal police organization in Kansas, I offer our testimony in support of Senate Bill 45. This bill is an enhancement of those who intentionally chose to inflict serious bodily injury or in death to persons who work on the behalf of the public.

This bill would raise the severity level of the crimes for individuals who inflict serious bodily injury or death to persons who work as public sector employees. Senate Bill 45 would:

- would define “public safety sector employee” to include any employee of any first responder department or public safety agency, while engaged in official duties
- amend the crime of involuntary manslaughter to raise the severity level of the crime to severity level 2 if the victim is a public safety sector employee
- amend the crime of aggravated battery to raise the severity level of the crime to severity level 3 if the crime is committed against a public safety sector employee

Public sector workers such as law enforcement officers and other first responders, inherently face hazardous circumstances on a daily basis. As they engage in their duties, they should be protected against personal assault, injury or death. We should not expect our public sector workers to suffer as victims to any of these acts, simply because they are doing their job. When a public service employee is injured or dies while performing their duty we should expect those responsible to face the strongest of sentencing penalties.

Being a first responder is inherently a dangerous job, yet they remain committed to serving their communities. As a profession they study, train, and plan for new and innovative ways in order to protect both themselves and the communities they serve. Unfortunately, they cannot control when someone else chooses to act unlawfully resulting in assaults, injuries or even death. When this occurs, the penalties must be severe and just.

We strongly support the passage of Senate Bill 45.

Sincerely,

Mik Shanks