



Kansas Sheriffs' Association

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Testimony to the House Energy, Utilities and Telecommunications Committee In Support of HB2084 February 5, 2019

Ladies and Gentleman of the Committee. I represent the Kansas Sheriffs Association, as well as a member of 911 Coordinating council. I am the Sheriff of Haskell County located in the southwest region of Kansas. We are less than 5000 souls in Haskell County and an agricultural, rural, based community.

I share support of this bill due to many reasons. One part thereof is a funding increase that assists smaller counties cope with rising costs of providing fast, accurate advanced 911 services. Since its inception, smaller agencies have received an overall yearly disbursement of \$50,000. This amount has not increased since that time. Costs assuredly have. From equipment to connection fees, many approved expenses have risen. The proposed increase to \$60,000 is certainly welcome and we hope it is sufficient.

It is vital at a minimum to maintain our current level of service. This means maintaining the system as it is currently configured. The "Now" is what the public expects and deserves. Stepping back or moving any direction other than forward would be a lack of responsibility to the public we answer to.

As many expectations upon public safety move to the forefront, technological advances come in the form of federal requirements. NENA (National Emergency Number Association) continues these upon us, and as such, so does the need of fiscal support of Kansas. Historically the funding associated with these mandated costs have been shouldered by the coordinating council. Without increased funding, the costs would be directly passed down to the individual entities. As the majority of counties have already transitioned to Text to 911, in the future comes video to 911 and vertical call tracking. With all of these advancements comes a cost.

The addition of the Grant Fund in a true form is appreciative to all parties. It will form a process for agencies to replace, upgrade, and purchase new equipment to enhance our abilities to respond. Whether this fund is utilized in times of great need or helping provide transparency of governmental process, this fund makes common technology available to all areas of Kansas.

The Kansas Sheriff's Association has worked closely with key associations and have drafted a more clarified policy and authority controls in the new legislation. It assists in clarifying the council's authority and direction of support of technology as it was originally intended. Other key components of this bill include Maintenance of GIS information, a friendly expenditure pre-approval process, and finally a fair process to appeal disagreements before a full representative body of peers.

In closing we are in support of the bill in all it encompasses. We appreciate the opportunity to be heard and considered on this important issue.

Sheriff Troy Briggs
Haskell County Sheriff's Office
Kansas Sheriffs Association
Kansas 911 Coordinating Council (Voting Member)