



**Testimony on House Bill 2140
Senate Committee on Financial Institutions & Insurance**

**Presented by
Colonel Mark A. Bruce, Superintendent
Kansas Highway Patrol**

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Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I am Colonel Mark Bruce, Superintendent of the Kansas Highway Patrol. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today in support of House Bill 2140.

During the 2015 Legislative Session, the Deferred Retirement Option Program, or DROP, was authorized as a pilot program available to members of the KHP's trooper ranks. The program will sunset on January 1, 2020 absent action by the Legislature.

DROP legislation was pursued to address a dramatic reduction in KHP staffing, primarily caused by the impact of a poor applicant pool and retirements. Other states had demonstrated success in slowing the attrition rate of senior members who chose to enter DROP. The same was hoped to be the case in Kansas.

To date, 14 eligible members of the Patrol have entered DROP. Although the numbers are low, they are explainable. As DROP went into effect, so did a new Career Progression Plan for troopers. This played a part in increasing the number and quality of our applicants. It also increased the pay of existing members. Consequently, otherwise eligible members have been taking advantage of the CPP to maximize their retirement benefit prior to entering DROP.

Because of low enrolment coupled with staffing challenges faced by the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, I would ask you to extend the DROP sunset until January 1, 2025 and expand membership to include eligible agents from the KBI. A slight increase in DROP participation and five more years of the pilot should provide invaluable information to KPERS for the purpose of determining actuarial impact and further expansion of the program. Maintaining our law enforcement officers in their current capacity is of tremendous operational importance to both the Patrol and the Bureau.

In closing, I would encourage this committee to favorably consider the provisions of HB 2140 by extending the sunset until January 1, 2025 and allowing membership to eligible agents from the KBI. At this time, I would be happy to answer questions.

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