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Proponent Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary for SB408

March 7, 2022

Chairman Owens, Vice Chair Smith, Ranking Member Highberger, and Members of the Committee:

The Johnson County Sheriff's Office supports **SB408 - Increasing the criminal penalties for multiple thefts of mail.**

You may have seen videos that victims post online from their video doorbell or other video system of packages being stolen from their porch. Some folks have gone so far as to put packages on their porch designed to "explode" when opened, spewing glitter, paint, or foul-smelling substances on the thief. While the videos are humorous, we don't recommend using decoy boxes.

What isn't humorous is the theft of packages from a person's porch has become a common crime. Research shows that between March and July of 2020 1 in 5 Americans reported a stolen package. Forty percent of these thefts occur in an apartment building or neighborhood. The average loss per victim is \$106 per theft.

This bill would provide a means of prosecuting "porch pirates" in the same manner that serial shoplifters are prosecuted. This would make this crime a felony rather than a misdemeanor, provided it can be proved that the thefts are "less than \$1,500 from three separate locations within a period of 72 hours as part of the same act or transaction or in two or more acts or transactions connected together or constituting parts of a common scheme or course of conduct." (page 2, lines 8-11).

This penalty fits the crime.

We ask that the committee recommend the bill favorably for passage.

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