

State of Kansas
House of Representatives

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Eric L. Smith
Representative, 76th District

Chairman Proehl and Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to briefly speak on HB2245, a bill that allows for Kansans to have emergency contact information included on their driver's license and state issued identification card.

Two years ago, I had a constituent come to me and tell me that it seemed odd that Kansas did not allow for emergency contact information on license plates and driver's licenses. Her concern was for her grandparent, who apparently liked to travel alone. I assured her that I would look into what it would take to allow this in Kansas. I also, while on patrol in my home jurisdiction, asked my dispatch to advise me when they came across this kind of information on varying states' plates and licenses.

It surely comes as no surprise to any of you that there are circumstances that would absolutely benefit first responders in their efforts to locate next of kin during tragic events. With the advent of social media, now more than ever time is of the essence in getting people tracked down and notified before they hear it from strangers. Also, getting timely response, by loved ones, to the hospital to make decisions about care has been an impossible challenge many times.

My research soon told me that many states have this option. While Florida was the first to include it, I had the revisor look at Texas and Colorado and the framework of Texas seemed to be as comprehensive as any. This is the model we have put into the bill. Every first responder I have talked to about this bill, dozens, have all told me that this is a common sense improvement to our system.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Rep. Eric Smith