

STATE OF KANSAS



KANSAS HIGHWAY PATROL
122 S.W. 7TH
TOPEKA, KS 66603

PHONE: (785) 296-6800
FAX: (785) 296-5956
www.KansasHighwayPatrol.org

GOVERNOR JEFF COLYER, M.D.
COLONEL MARK A. BRUCE, SUPERINTENDENT

**Testimony on Senate Bill 369
House Committee on Federal and State Affairs**

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

March 14, 2018

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 on behalf of the KHP in support of Senate Bill 369.

The purpose of this bill is to restore civil service protection to the 4 majors within the KHP that lost it as an unintended consequence of our Career Progression Plan that was implemented in 2016. This plan accomplished two things for the Patrol. First, it increased pay for the purposes of increasing the number of applicants applying to become new troopers. Second, it corrected a compaction issue regarding the pay of our supervisors.

Development of the Career Progression Plan (CPP) unintentionally required the highest ranking classified members of the Patrol, our majors, to become unclassified employees, in order to be placed at the appropriate spot on the CPP.

Moving the majors to the unclassified service made them the only at-will uniformed members in the trooper ranks. They can be transferred, demoted or fired without cause. These individuals are career members of the Patrol who were hired on as troopers and earned promotions through the ranks and to their current position.

Leaving the majors in the unclassified service will have a negative impact on the Patrol's ability to attract the most qualified people to apply for this position. Eligibility for promotion to major, by KHP policy is limited to captains. We generally have 18-20 members serving at that level. They are several years into their career and many won't apply for a major's vacancy because they don't want to move. The remaining number of potential candidates will be reduced by the requirement to leave classified service in order to be promoted.

The assistant superintendent and myself are in the unclassified service. However, at the end of our appointments, state law requires that we go back no further in rank than the last permanent position we held. In fairness to our majors and in the best interests of the Patrol, I am requesting that their position be afforded the same, earned protection.

Again, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. When Senate Bill 369 is put to a vote, I hope you will favorably consider its passage. With that, Mr. Chairman, I would stand for questions.

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