



Written Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 2424 House Judiciary Committee

Good Afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. The Kansas Association of Broadcasters is a trade association representing nearly 260 radio and television stations in Kansas.

We find ourselves once again in front of the legislature asking for more openness – and yes, transparency and trust from law enforcement. And we are here again because we had another tragic deadly shooting of a young man by a police officer.

As we have stated before in testimony on the subject of open records involving law enforcement, the likelihood that officers act correctly and within agency policies in shootings is pretty high. But without the public hearing all the facts, it's difficult to know for sure or to create the trust citizens demand – and law enforcement needs.

The case prompting this legislation is another example of a family wanting to know ALL the facts surrounding the death of their loved one. Much like previous officer involved shooting deaths, the family had to use the court system to challenge law enforcement's refusal to be forthcoming with information. Law enforcement and District Attorneys routinely withhold information for the public to view, stating it's part of their investigation. In the case that brings us to HB 2424, there is nothing left to investigate, and the family still wants to know why the shooting was justified.

This bill is not aimed at one agency or one county. It's to get consistency in investigation protocol and most importantly, providing the public much needed insight as to what happened to one of their own. Instead of finding reasons why the public or even a family shouldn't have access to non private information in a case, why not look for ways to be more OPEN? As a legislator, do you think that is asking too much?

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your support of HB 2424.

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