



February 7, 2024

House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee

HB 2656

Chairman Owens and Members of the Committee-

My name is Lt. Chris Marceau, and I have served eighteen years with the Wichita Police Department. I currently work in the Special Investigations Bureau, which is responsible for investigating, providing follow up investigation, or assisting in the investigation of cases related to narcotics, illegal substances, vice crimes, asset forfeitures, and any investigation requiring the use of covert resources. Being responsive to community concerns is the bureau's highest priority.

A significant concern in the community started to develop in September of 2022 when Wichita began to see a rise in groups of motorcycles, particularly smaller motorcycles, committing several traffic violations and other crimes. These groups are often referred to by citizens as stunt riders or hooligans. Some of these packs of motorcycle riders have shut down intersections, often blowing through red lights and stunting, causing safety concerns to innocent drivers. A pack mentality has evolved that, at times, used intimidation tactics towards frustrated drivers who became disenchanted with the behavior of these motorcyclists. Several of these cases have resulted in property damage, aggravated assaults, and injuries to innocent victims. To make matters more difficult, many law enforcement agencies have policies that prohibit the pursuit of fleeing vehicles for traffic violations and less-serious crimes. While this challenge is a unique one to law enforcement, Wichita is not alone regarding this problem, as this issue had become prevalent in mid-size and large cities throughout the United States.

Two people have died in Wichita because of the reckless and malicious actions of individuals involved in stunting or reckless behavior on motorcycles. On February 20, 2023, a 48-year-old female pedestrian was struck and killed by a 21-year-old stunt rider who was riding a wheelie near 11th and Broadway. The suspect fled the scene after the accident on his motorcycle and was later apprehended. The following May, just over three months later, the same suspect was apprehended for stunting near Waterman and Emporia. On September 1, 2023, a 19-year-old male motorcyclist fired multiple rounds from a firearm at a vehicle that was occupied by a 72-year-old male and a 69-year-old female. The female was struck by a bullet and died. The suspect fled the scene and was apprehended later. Not long before the incident, the suspect was with a pack of motorcyclists who were engaged in reckless actions at an intersection.

As stated above, this unique challenge to law enforcement is not confined to Wichita but is a growing national problem and will most likely continue to get worse unless we take necessary measures. The relatively low cost and easy access to these smaller motorcycles, partnered with the thrill and excitement that some people get from this type of activity, along with wide-spread use of social media has caused this issue to grow over time. I believe that the passing of House Bill No. 2656 is a step in the right direction to curtail the illegal behavior.

House Bill No. 2656 identifies a “course of conduct” of three or more violations from a list that is commonly violated by these packs of two or more people over a period of time, however short. The Bill creates the crime of engaging in a street stunt that affects other vehicular traffic in an intersection or roadway, causing other drivers or people nearby to fear for their safety, or the safety of others. This type of violation would be a misdemeanor for a first conviction, and a felony for second or subsequent convictions. If the behavior results in damage to property or causes injury to another person, the conviction will be a felony. It also adds engaging in a street stunt to the list of crimes included in fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer, making it a felony.

Lt. Chris Marceau

Wichita Police Department

Special Investigations Bureau