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## **Testimony to Senate Committee on Judiciary Proponent Testimony on HB2665**

March 14, 2024

Chairwoman Warren and Committee Members,

The Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police, Kansas Peace Officers Association, & the Kansas Sheriff's Association support passage of HB2665.

The KACP, KPOA & KSA feel SB361 will address what seems like an increasing problem of drivers fleeing the scene of serious and often deadly vehicular crashes.

In the past year, just in the Sedgwick County area, there have been Hit & Run crashes involving serious injury and fatalities. We realize this happens across our state. The perpetrators of these criminal acts have fled the scene of the crash and willfully attempted to conceal their involvement by hiding their vehicles and themselves from investigators.

It is often only because of the tenacious investigators who follow leads and uncover bits of evidence that lead to the apprehension of the perpetrator. The investigators use pieces of automobiles left at the scene to identify makes and models of the involved vehicles. The investigators work to locate video from cameras, public and private, in the area of the crash. The investigators piece the evidence pre-crash and post-crash to identify the perpetrator. So, why do people flee the scene of a crash? In my experience drivers flee the scene of any crash for one or more of the following reasons.

- Driver's license problems:
  - The driver does not have a driver's license
  - The driver has a suspended or revoked driver's license
  - The driver is driving in violation of restrictions on their driver's license
- Outstanding warrants:
  - Felony
  - Misdemeanor
  - No warrants – the driver thinks they have warrants
- Driving a vehicle with no proof of vehicle liability insurance
- Driving impaired
  - Alcohol
  - Prescription drugs
  - Illicit drugs
- Fear of the property or personal injury/fatality involved in the crash that they caused

All are examples of failure to exercise personal responsibility. I have interviewed and set in on interviews with many Hit & Run drivers during my career. It has been my experience that drivers who are involved in injury/fatal crashes think they can escape the repercussions of their actions. They feel that if they can hide long enough, they can escape accountability.

While HB2665 does not change the severity level for those who suffer great bodily injury, it does increase criminal penalties for a driver who leaves the scene of a deadly crash.

Under current law, it is a severity level 5, person felony when a driver leaves the scene of an accident and knew or reasonably should have known that the accident resulted in injury or death. The bill would increase this penalty to a severity level 4, person felony if the accident resulted in the death of one person. If the crash resulted in the death of more than one person, penalty would be a severity level 3, person felony.

The KACP and KPOA would also ask you to consider amending Section 1(c). The amendment would be: "The director ~~may~~shall revoke the license or permit to drive or any nonresident operating privilege of any person ~~so~~ convicted *of any violation of this section.*"

Our associations support passage of HB2665.

Chief Darrell Atteberry  
Bel Aire Police Department  
Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police  
Legislative Chair