

Kansas Sheriffs Association



Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police



Kansas County & District Attorneys Association



Kansas Peace Officers Association

March 1, 2011

To the Kansas Senate Ways and Means and House Appropriations Committee members,

The Kansas County and District Attorneys Association, the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police, the Kansas Sheriffs Association, and the Kansas Peace Officers Association are growing increasingly concerned about the negative impact to local public safety of reduced funding proposals on the budget of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation. Specifically, we in public safety are concerned about the ability of the KBI to continue a long tradition of supporting local law enforcement. The Kansas Bureau of Investigation's primary law enforcement role is the support of local law enforcement. This is contained in the KBI Mission Statement: "The Kansas Bureau of Investigation is dedicated to **providing professional investigative and laboratory services to criminal justice agencies**, and the collection and dissemination of criminal justice information to public and private agencies, for the purpose of promoting public safety and the prevention of crime in Kansas." (Emphasis added.)

The KBI was established on July 1, 1939, by an act of the Kansas Legislature. It was clear from the beginning that local law enforcement agencies held the responsibility to investigate criminal activity. In fact, the KBI was born on the premise it would enter local crime investigations only by invitation of the local agencies. It was recognized that many law enforcement agencies in Kansas are not large enough to have the resources necessary to efficiently investigate some types of crimes. Complex crimes do not occur on a regular basis in every law enforcement jurisdiction in Kansas. The KBI has for years been the resource local law enforcement can call on when a criminal investigation requires expertise, personnel, and investigative support beyond local capacity.

Half of Kansas law enforcement agencies have 5 or fewer officers. Seventy-three percent of Kansas law enforcement agencies have ten or fewer officers. Those agencies lack the financial and personnel resources to conduct lengthy complicated investigations. Drug investigations, financial crime investigations, cyber crime investigations, and even some homicide cases, sex offenses, and organized criminal activity exceed the capacity of many local Kansas law enforcement agencies to investigate.

There are only two local law enforcement criminal forensics laboratories in Kansas. While the two largest metropolitan areas have the resources to build and staff their own criminal laboratory capabilities, the other 103 counties in Kansas do not. We must rely on the KBI, regardless of the lack of speed, for laboratory services. And if those services are not there, some criminals will go unpunished.

Appropriations Committee

Date March 9, 2011

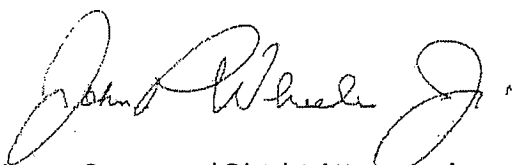
Attachment 4

Over the past several years we have watched as the capacity of the KBI to assist local law enforcement has dwindled to a near catastrophic level. A lack of sufficient field agents to respond quickly to assist in investigations and the lack of timely laboratory criminal forensic examinations and results are just two of the areas where we have seen diminished KBI support. Now we hear rumors of no longer offering local law enforcement the much needed polygraph assistance, cyber crime investigation assistance, and even assistance in drug trafficking investigations other than in task force areas. The backlog of laboratory analysis continues to be problematic. In some cases results are not available when a case is going to trial. Criminal cases must proceed to avoid a dismissal due to the lack of a speedy trial, with or without such evidence. Suspects remain at large awaiting their identification through forensic examination of evidence; free to victimize more Kansans before their eventual identification and arrest. DNA analysis of evidence is backlogged. Firearm forensic examinations are running behind. And latent print analysis results are slow.

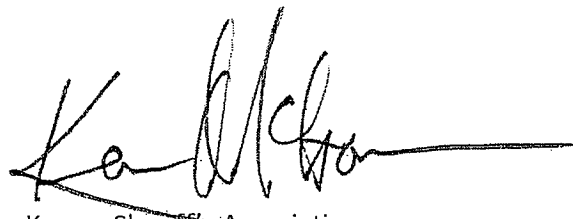
We are aware of the shortage of tax dollars and the never ending requests for what few dollars are available. However, public safety is one of the most primary priorities of government. We ask you to carefully consider funding the KBI at a level that will continue their long tradition of supporting local law enforcement. . . supporting the people of Kansas who live in the less urbanized areas of the state. . . helping local law enforcement respond to victimized Kansans from the areas many of you represent.

The ability of the KBI to support local law enforcement with timely laboratory services, support in complicated and technical investigations, and support in cases where additional resources are needed to stop a criminal from continued attacks on the people of Kansas is key to public safety in Kansas. We know they have to share some level of burden of the shrinking budgets. But we also know we cannot always provide timely and quality investigations Kansans expect in order to bring many of the criminals in Kansas to justice without adequate state law enforcement assistance.

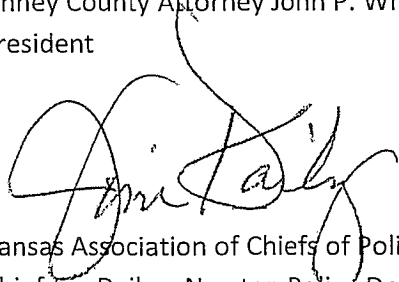
We appreciate your consideration in this matter as you face the monumental fiscal challenges of our state budget.




Kansas County and District Attorneys Association
Finney County Attorney John P. Wheeler, Jr.
President



Kansas Sheriff's Association
Ken McGovern, Douglas County Sheriff
President



Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police
Chief Jim Dailey, Newton Police Department
President



Kansas Peace Officers Association
Steve Culp, Executive Director CPOST
President