

Senate Committee on Ethics, Elections and Local Government
Statement Opposing SB 109
Tuesday, February 12, 2013
On behalf of
Kansas Sheriffs' Association, Kansas Peace Officers Association,
Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police

Chairman Pyle and Members of the Committee,

This statement is presented on behalf of the Kansas Sheriffs' Association (KSA), the Kansas Peace Officers Association (KPOA) and the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police (KACP) concerning our collective opposition to proposed SB 109 dealing with prohibiting hiring lobbyists using public funds.

Statewide the KSA represents 104 Sheriffs and the Director of Police for Riley County. The majority of KSA funding is derived from private vendors who pay to participate in KA conferences by using their private resources. Overall the dues for KSA are a very nominal portion of KSA funding.

Under overreaching SB 109, Kansas Sheriffs' Offices would essentially be prohibited from having representation in front of the Kansas Legislature for the creation of law and/or amendments thereto or to ask for elimination of some legislation. Sheriffs' Offices throughout the State of Kansas are endorsed by the State through statute, but they are funded through local dollars. Thus it is appropriate for us to approach the Legislature with our concerns.

SB 109 would also criminalize needed communications between Kansas Sheriffs and their State Legislators. Our Lobbyist is a cornerstone based on the fact he represents the collective voice of Sheriffs and their needs on a daily basis, which is necessary when the Legislature is in session. Our Lobbyist saves public resources by providing a more efficient use of time and resources for the 104 individual Sheriffs and the Director of Police for Riley County.

As local officials, we have the fundamental right to join together as an Association to petition and advocate for law enforcement before the Legislature, Governor and other entities. Spending local tax dollars to engage in matters that impact local government should always be an option for locally elected government representatives. As you are well aware, if our constituents do not agree with our actions the election process (ballot box) makes us accountable. Citizens of Kansas look for a strong deliberative process where all voices are heard and carefully considered.

As SB 109 would limit the voice of law enforcement at the Capitol, we strongly urge you to oppose SB 109. Thank you for receiving this opposition and serving Kansans.

/s/ Sheriff Frank Denning
Legislative Chair for Kansas Sheriffs' Association
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