

Hello and good morning \_\_\_\_\_ my name is Reuben Eckels, and I am the Deputy Director of Sunflower Community Action. I want to first thank and express my support for the sponsor of SB18 bill Sen. David Haley and also Gail Finney my representative for her bill in the House.

In light of all of the police related shootings across the country we have seen many of those cases decided by eye witnesses who as we know can sometimes not be very reliable. So basically what it comes down to is officer's testimony against the citizen's families or friends. Both sides come with a bias and many times leads those biases lead to mistrust between citizens and those who have been called to protect and serve our communities. So to help elevate this discrepancy we support SB18 because as former captain Easter and now Sheriff Easter said it protects both sides.

The camera is an impartial witness, who can bring a more transparent and object view to the situation. In many cities where the use of body cameras is worn by those who are called to protect and serve we have seen false allegations against those officers decrease. We have also seen officers who have abused their authority such as the officer who shot a man reaching for his wallet as he was commanded to do dismissed from the force and brought up on charges.

I believe SB18 again will allow for more transparency and trust by the community. It will show how difficult the job of being a police officer is and help the public appreciate the work of those who put on those badges and uniforms. We know that there will be cost to implementing this bill but one bad shooting can cost in the millions also. We believe the benefits outweigh the cost. Please pass this bill. The public needs it our law enforcement officers need it and our communities need it. Thank you for your time and allowing me to speak.

Sincerely,

Reuben D. Eckels,  
Deputy Director,  
Sunflower Community Action