

MINUTES OF THE House COMMITTEE ON Transportation

The meeting was called to order by Representative Rex Crowell at
Chairperson

1:30 ~~xxx~~/p.m. on January 31, 1984 in room 519-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except: Rep. Norman Justice - Excused
Rep. Betty Jo Charlton - Excused
Rep. Larry Erne - Excused

Committee staff present:

Fred Carman, Revisor of Statutes
Hank Avila, Legislative Research
Donna Mulligan, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative David Webb
Mr. Wilbur Brockway
Mr. Ed DeSoignie, Kansas Department of Transportation
Sgt. William Jacobs, Kansas Highway Patrol
Mr. Bob Haley, Kansas Department of Transportation

The first order of business was a hearing on HB-2719, and Representative Webb, sponsor of the bill, briefed the committee on the contents of the bill.

Mr. Wilbur Brockway of Olathe, Kansas, was introduced and testified as a proponent of HB-2719.

Mr. Ed DeSoignie of the Kansas Department of Transportation took the stand and informed the committee that HB-2719 amends K.S.A. 8-1703 to require lighted headlamps from a half an hour before sunset, to a half hour after sunrise. (See Attachment 1)

Mr. DeSoignie advised that the statute which this bill would amend presently conforms with Chapter 12 of the Uniform Vehicle Code by requiring lighted headlamps from a half hour after sunset to a half hour before sunrise, and the amendments being proposed remove that conformity. Mr. DeSoignie indicated KDOT does not see the suggested changes as meriting deviation or exception to a policy of uniformity with the Uniform Vehicle Code.

Sgt. William Jacobs of the Highway Patrol testified on HB-2719 and indicated the Highway Patrol remains neutral, but they have not had any problems in the past with the law the way it is. He mentioned it would be difficult to stop someone in broad daylight because their headlights weren't on.

This completed the hearing on HB-2719.

Chairman Crowell then took up HB-2677 concerning lighting equipment for school buses. Mr. Robert Haley, Director of Administration, Kansas Department of Transportation, testified in support of HB-2677. (See Attachment 2)

Mr. Haley explained that basically the bill authorizes the use of white strobe lights, but it doesn't require them. He said DOT knows of no definite study on this issue, but they have reviewed material which appears to indicate significant advantages, and they do support the option.

Mr. Haley related that KDOT believes there is significant confusion regarding current statutes to justify a change. He referred to K.S.A. 8-1729(c) which states flashing lights are prohibited except as authorized or required in K.S.A. 8-1730 which, in turn, authorizes the Secretary to adopt rules and regulations on lighting. He also cited K.A.R. 36-13-30 (b) which states that school buses manufactured

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House COMMITTEE ON Transportation,
room 519-S, Statehouse, at 1:30 ~~xxx~~/p.m. on January 31, 1984.

on and after July 1, 1983, shall meet the chassis and body construction specifications contained in the 1980 revised edition, "Standards for School Buses and Operations." He explained that the "standards" under "Body Standards" provide for an optional white flashing strobe light.

Representative Adam inquired as to whether or not Mr. Haley had information concerning the safety factor when using strobe lights. He replied that he talked to a school bus expert who attended a national meeting where strobe lights were demonstrated on film, and he felt strobe lights showed the bus much better than traditional lighting.

Mr. Haley pointed out that strobe lights should only be used in adverse visibility conditions, such as fog or rain.

Representative Johnson commented that when a strobe light is mounted on an airplane, it is used when visibility is good to allow aircraft to be seen. During periods of bad weather the strobe lights are turned off because when they strike the fog or clouds and reflect back into the cockpit they blind the pilot, and the same thing would probably happen in an automobile or bus. He also pointed out the driver in an approaching vehicle would be temporarily blinded with the use of a strobe light, and recommended that the state should do some testing.

Chairman Crowell asked if a school district had strobe lights on some of their buses, and not on others, would they be subjecting themselves to a liability situation if a child was hurt or killed during adverse weather conditions while riding on a bus which didn't have a strobe light.

Mr. Haley indicated he would research the issue and report back to the committee at a later time.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05.


Rex Crowell, Chairman

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

STATE OFFICE BUILDING—TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612



JOHN B. KEMP, Secretary of Transportation

JOHN CARLIN, Governor

MEMORANDUM TO: HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

DATE: JANUARY 31, 1984

REGARDING: HOUSE BILL 2719

This bill amends K.S.A. 8-1703 to require that lighted headlamps are required "from a half hour before ^{sunset} sunrise to a half hour after sunrise." This statute presently conforms with Chapter 12 of the Uniform Vehicle Code by requiring lighted headlamps "from a half hour after sunset to a half hour before sunrise." The amendments being proposed remove that conformity.

The Uniform Vehicle Code was developed by the National Committee on Uniform Traffic Laws and Ordinances with the intended goal of uniformity in traffic regulations throughout the United States. Uniformity in the traffic laws makes traffic less hazardous as people travel from state to state.

The Department would not see the suggested amendments as meriting deviation or exception to a policy of uniformity.

Attachment 1

KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

STATE OFFICE BUILDING—TOPEKA, KANSAS 66612



JOHN B. KEMP, Secretary of Transportation

JOHN CARLIN, Governor

MEMORANDUM TO: House Transportation Committee

FROM: Robert Haley, Director of Administration *RH*

RE: Support of 1984 H.B. 2677 relating to the use of a strobe light on a school bus.

DATE: January 31, 1984

- I. The significant language is: "Any school bus, in addition to the lights required or permitted, may be equipped with a white flashing strobe light for use during adverse conditions."
- II. KDOT is unable to authoritatively address the merits of the question.
 - A. KDOT knows of no definitive study on the issue.
 - B. KDOT has reviewed material that appears to indicate significant advantages; however, the material was provided by the vendor.
 - C. KDOT has not seen any material indicating problems with the light.
 - D. KDOT supports the option.
- III. KDOT believes that there is significant confusion concerning legal authority to justify a change.
 - A. K.S.A. 8-1729 (c) states: "Flashing lights are prohibited except as authorized or required in K.S.A. ... 8-1730 ..."
 - B. K.S.A. 8-1730 authorizes the Secretary to adopt rules and regulations on lighting.
 - C. K.A.R. 36-13-30 (b) states: "School buses manufactured on and after July 1, 1983, shall meet the chassis and body construction specifications contained in the 1980 revised edition, Standards for School Buses and Operations."
 - D. The "standards" under "Body Standards" provide for an optional white flashing strobe light.

Attachment 2