



Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 142 House Committee on Transportation

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The Kansas Highway Patrol appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 142, and we respectfully request the Committee consider our agency's concurrence. Senate Bill 142 would require the driver of a motor vehicle to move to a lane not adjacent to a stationary vehicle on their side of the roadway displaying hazard lights, flares, traffic cones, reflective triangles, and other caution signals, or if moving to a lane not adjacent is impossible or unsafe, to slow down when approaching the stationary vehicle displaying the same. Violating the provisions of Senate Bill 142 would result in a \$75 fine.

Current Kansas law provides that drivers upon approaching a stationary authorized emergency vehicle using its emergency lights are required to move into a lane not adjacent to the stationary emergency vehicle, or if moving to a lane not adjacent is impossible or unsafe, to slow down when approaching the stationary emergency vehicle (K.S.A. 8-1530). Violation of this law also results in a \$195 fine. Authorized emergency vehicles include, but are not limited to, fire, police, and EMS vehicles, and tow vehicles. Senate Bill 142 would essentially mirror the requirements of drivers approaching emergency vehicles and apply them to any stationary vehicle utilizing their hazard lights or other caution signals.

Our troopers can attest to the danger they encounter on a daily basis when working on the side of the road. A matter of feet and sometimes even inches can be the difference between conducting a safe traffic stop and being seriously injured or killed after being struck by a passing vehicle. For that reason, we have laws to protect police, firefighters, emergency medical services, and tow truck operators. We believe the same level of care and attention should be afforded to stopped motorists on our roadways.

Oftentimes, our citizens in the circumstances described by the bill are not given another choice but to stop on the shoulder of a highway after their tire is blown, their engine overheats, or when they have simply run low on fuel. We can all recall a time when our car has left us stranded and the feeling of semi-trucks whooshing past our window, the worry for the safety of our children in the back seat, and the dread of not knowing whether the next approaching vehicle may just be the one to cross the fog line and turn a bad day into a deadly day.

We believe this law takes a commonsense approach to remedying an unsafe situation. Kansas would join 21 other states with similar laws, including our neighbors in Oklahoma, Iowa, and Colorado. We appreciate that the bill considers traffic, weather, and road conditions and whether these movements would be safe to perform. We also believe that by making Senate Bill 142 law, we would strengthen our other "move over" laws as it aligns our message across the board – if you see flashing lights, move over and slow down.

In conclusion, the Kansas Highway Patrol strongly supports Senate Bill 142. We sincerely thank members of this Committee for their consideration of our testimony, and we urge their support of this bill.

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