

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB500 AS AMENDED

by

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It is NOT a CRIME to be POOR. Yet **over 208,000 Kansans** of **ALL races** have had their driver's license suspended because they did not have enough money to pay their original traffic fine and court costs or appear in court within 30 days.

As a result, the Department of Revenue suspends their driver's license as a way for Kansas municipal and district courts to attempt to force people to pay a debt with money they don't have. Once a person's license is suspended, they are basically under "**HOUSE ARREST**" with no way to legally drive to work to earn enough money to pay their traffic fine or buy groceries, take their kids to and from school or any other place they need to go. Consequently, thousands of Kansans have lost their jobs, ended up on welfare, become homeless or sent to jail.

So, when you work and pass SB500 out of Committee, please amend it with the provisions in SB192 and SB440 which were drafted with input from Kansas judges, attorneys plus state and national organizations. These same amendments apply to drivers with either a Suspended or Revoked license and were included in SB100 which was passed by both the Senate and House Transportation Committees during the 2021 Session.

Passing SB500 with these amendments will do the following:

- 1) Allows Kansas Courts to withdraw arrest warrants, expunge previous driving on suspended convictions and remove additional fines, fees, or imprisonment so drivers with either a Suspended or Revoked license for failure to pay a fine will qualify for a Restricted license.
- 2) Allows a driver to agree to a payment plan and/or community service prior to coming to Court. This saves Court resources and having to issue warrants for failure to appear.
- 3) Provides a web link to easily download a restricted license and/or hardship application.
- 4) Eliminates all reinstatement fees so drivers do not have to pay an additional \$500 to \$1000 after they have paid their original traffic violation fine(s) and court costs.
- 5) Allows the person to legally drive while they are doing their Community Service and/or earning money to make their payments plus survive and take care of their families while paying their original traffic fines and court costs without being forced to live on welfare.
- 6) Allows the Court to extend the period of time for a driver to pay all accumulated traffic fines and fees beyond the current one-year limit without suspending their license again.

By passing SB500 as amended, thousands of traffic cases will be cleared from court dockets plus \$48 million dollars collected which will never be paid without these changes in law.

Passing SB500 with the amendments in SB192 and SB440 will also make sure that over 208,000 of our fellow Kansans can finally drive again legally. Plus, our law enforcement officers will not have to spend hours each time they take a driver to jail and impound their car just because they did not have enough money to pay their original traffic fine and court costs on time.

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