



Written Testimony on HB 2312
Monday, March 14, 2011
Senate Judiciary Committee

Good Morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. I am Kent Cornish, President/Executive Director of the Kansas Association of Broadcasters, representing nearly 280 radio and television stations across the state.

We are in full support of HB 2312 which would increase penalties for those found guilty of stealing precious metals and attempting to sell them to scrap dealers - as well as dealers who fail to meet registration requirements. Our radio and television stations use enormous amounts of copper wiring in the transmission of their signals.

That transmission occurs through equipment located at tower sites, which generally are located in sparse rural areas of a community. Despite FCC required security such as fencing, lighting and alarms systems, the thefts continue. In the past year I have received six reports of theft from members around the state – and there could be more. These varied from stealing a small copper line and some air conditioning units to over 150 feet of copper line at one location.

Replacement costs of these totaled nearly \$75,000. But just as devastating is the fact that several of the stations were knocked off the air because of the stolen wiring – which cost can't be calculated. The thieves have gotten bolder. In the case of the stolen air conditioning units, they broke in one night to steal the equipment and wiring, and the owners purchased a stronger pad lock only to have it cut the next night when the thieves returned to look for more.

Anything that can help deter this kind of criminal behavior, including stronger penalties, is encouraged by all broadcasters. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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3-14-11
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