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House Federal and State Affairs Committee

Testimony on HB 2055

Chairman Siegfried and Members of the Committee

I am Stuart Little appearing on behalf of the Kansas Community Corrections Association.

Overview

I want briefly to provide some background information on what community corrections and KCCA are so that you might be more aware of this critical component in the community correction systems in Kansas.

Community corrections agencies are thirty-one statutorily mandated programs in each part of the state, governed by county commissions and community advisory boards for both adult and juvenile offenders. They provide cost-effective community-based supervision instead of prison for adult and juvenile offenders with lower severity level offenses (although the offenders are increasingly more severe and high-risk). The courts and sentencing guidelines determine whether an adult offender is assigned to regular probation (through the courts) or intensive supervise probation with graduated sanctions in a community corrections program. Juveniles are also sent to community corrections by district courts through the juvenile offender placement matrix.

Kansas Community Corrections Association is the voluntary association comprised of twenty-eight community corrections agencies and seven affiliated groups. I am here today representing these thirty-five member agencies.

Request for Exclusion

The members of the KCCA respectfully request the Committee create an exclusion in HB 2055 that would allow the local governing board to post no concealed carry in local community corrections offices as well as juvenile intake and assessment facilities. Around the State of Kansas these offices are located in a variety of locations, some public, some private, and all with an extensive variety of design, traffic flow, and security issues.

Criminal offenders on supervision are prohibited from using a concealed carry permit if they have one. However, because of driving restrictions and other circumstances, many times offenders are accompanied by family members or others and they may be legal permit holders. In the juvenile field, juveniles are always accompanied by a parent or guardian. There are likely few more high stress, anxiety rich settings than citizen contact with the correctional system where the stakes, including potential revocation and prison, can cause conflict. The KCCA believes this high-stress and high-risk environment should be free from the participation from any person who may possess a weapon.

I would be happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.