

CITY OF ANDOVER ANDOVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

Public Service Excellence thru Compassion, Integrity & Commitment

March 7, 2016

Testimony before the House Appropriations Committee
Support of SSB335 - Funding for the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center

Chairman Ryckman and Committee Members:

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the House Appropriations Committee. I am Michael Keller, Chief of Police for the City of Andover. Thank you for the opportunity to address the Committee today regarding Senate Bill 335, a bill that proposes a new revenue source and much needed funding for the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center (KLETC).

As you may already be aware, KLETC has always been funded through the sole revenue source of docket fees. However, these docket fees have been declining for several years now, and anticipated to be around \$100,000 short of KLETC's current fiscal year's revised downward projections. SSB-335 offers a new revenue source in addition to docket fees that would help sustain KLETC's operations at its needed budget level, address deferred infrastructure maintenance and equipment replacement needs, and give KLETC a projected 6-8 years of operating funds with which to address Kansas law enforcement training needs.

The Andover Police Department is just one of 437 law enforcement agencies in Kansas that rely on KLETC to provide high quality training, and a significant majority of who rely on KLETC to provide their new officer's initial 14-week basic academy training. Additionally, KLETC provides a variety of ongoing "in-service" type training opportunities for our officers, in order for the officers to obtain and maintain their state-mandated 40 hours of training each year. KLETC provides these training opportunities on a variety of topics including leadership, supervision, ethics, tactical operations, emergency vehicle operation, as well as, "Bias-Based Policing/Racial Profiling" training required annually for all law enforcement officers. Without KLETC's willingness and ability to make these types of classes available to the smaller departments, some of these very important and critical topics would be unavailable to the smaller agencies; law enforcement training in Kansas would be severely limited and inconsistent state-wide; and the professionalism and quality of Kansas law enforcement would be severely diminished.

I have been in Kansas law enforcement for over 35 years. Having served 20+ years of my career with the Wichita Police Department, and now having been a Chief of Police for two smaller agencies for almost 15 years, I have a unique perspective to base my support for SB-335. I can attest that KLETC is important to both the large and small agencies, providing quality and consistent law enforcement training throughout Kansas. However, KLETC also provides the training opportunities for the smaller agencies that their officers might not otherwise be able to attend or afford. In regards to training, KLETC provides the smaller law enforcement agencies in Kansas the opportunity to compete with the larger agencies.

Public safety and the training of our police officers is a core government function and the citizens in our communities deserve high quality training. KLETC has both a history and reputation statewide for providing high quality contemporary law enforcement training. To address today's policing challenges, it's imperative that our communities have well-trained police officers. We rely heavily on KLETC to provide this greatly needed critical training.



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