



Andrew D. Dedeke
Sheriff

LEAVENWORTH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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Testimony to the Federal and State Affairs Committee

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Sheriff Andrew D. Dedeke

Law enforcement, perhaps now more than ever, requires help from external sources to perform many of the tasks we are charged with. These sources must work collaboratively in order to address the challenges presented in a manner which best facilitates the demands of public safety.

The State of Kansas can boast cooperative and professional law enforcement officers throughout the state. What defines these men and women is their desire to serve their communities with a willingness to work together, lend a helping hand and to share resources that are not always readily available.

Certainly, not all communities enjoy the same level of equipment, training or personnel. Nevertheless, all communities have that point at which help from outside agencies must be called upon. This may be a natural disaster preceded by a warning such as a flood or tornado. Increasingly, the threat is man-made and often strikes without warning. Critical incidents such as school shootings, explosive devices and mass disturbances are but just a few examples of the stories we see all too often on our nightly news. While I thank God each and every day my community has been relatively spared such atrocities, I realize each day brings us one day closer to confronting such an evil.

I believe every Sheriff and Chief of Police is cognizant of the dangers their officers face daily and know just how difficult it is to maintain the peace and protect our citizens. We train for a variety of scenarios and develop reaction plans to guide our responses. Planning and training are great ways to prepare,

however when it becomes necessary to execute a response the toll upon personnel and equipment can be crippling.

With few exceptions, most law enforcement agencies in the MARC region simply cannot sustain the demands necessary for any given critical incident. Indeed, this is the very reason so many of us respond to requests for mutual aid and memorandums of understanding. Simply, the task is too large for one agency to carry the burden of a critical incident entirely. Further, some incidents do not stop at jurisdictional boundaries.

The four Kansas counties of Leavenworth, Wyandotte, Johnson and Miami are each members of the Mid America Regional Counsel, often referred to as the MARC Region. In addition to these four Kansas counties, the region also includes the Missouri counties of Platte, Clay, Jackson, Cass and Ray. This region has long ago identified the necessity and benefit of working closely with one another. Whether it is training, a shared communications system or assisting with an investigation, the identified Kansas counties interact with their Missouri counterparts daily throughout the region.

In a critical incident such as an active shooter or act of terrorism, seconds count and those in command at the scene must have the authority to request assistance from the nearest agency regardless of the state line. Similarly, the responding agency must have the authority to enter into the requesting state. HB 2007 permits Kansas to recognize the foreign officers' certification and provide qualified immunity reducing exposure to liability.

I have spoken to Wyandotte County Sheriff Don Ash at length regarding this bill. Sheriff Ash and I very quickly identified possible targets in our jurisdictions for acts of terrorism and or civil disobedience. Wyandotte County is home to the Bob Dole Federal Courthouse, located approximately ¼ of a mile from the State of Missouri. History has shown us time and again federal courthouses are likely targets of violence. Other areas of concern within Wyandotte County include the EPA Research Laboratory located approximately 100 yards from Missouri and the infrastructure which comprises the electrical grid and transmission lines for the area.

In Leavenworth County, we have identified several potential targets which have been the objective of protests throughout the years. The United States Penitentiary and Fort Leavenworth are a few examples where we have confronted protests and remain constantly vigilant due to high profile inmates. Fort Leavenworth also plays a significant role in the development of leaders for our armed forces and is the home of many generals and high-profile visitors during the year. We are reminded that

military installations are not free from terrorism and should such an event occur, cooperation and assistance from local law enforcement will be required. As many federal employees and soldiers reside in Platte County, any action taken against the federal footprint will have a direct effect on our Missouri neighbors. The examples listed are but a few within just two jurisdictions. Should one give consideration to the potential targets within the entire MARC region, the list quickly becomes enormous.

In closing, I believe having the ability to call upon every available resource to respond in a time of crisis benefits the entire law enforcement community, which in turn benefits the communities they serve. I realize HB 2007 is unique and specific to the Kansas City metropolitan area. Following a thorough and proper examination, it is easy to see why so many have recognized this as a truly cooperative effort which places the lives and safety of our citizens as the top priority.



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