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8500 Santa Fe Drive
Overland Park, Kansas 66212
913-895-6000 | www.opkansas.org

Written Statement to the House Committee on Judiciary
By Dick Carter, Jr.
Substitute SB 18 – Body cameras worn by law enforcement officers – open records
February 4, 2016

Honorable Chairman and members of the House Judiciary Committee, the City of Overland Park provides this written statement in supporting Substitute SB 18.

On behalf of the Overland Park Police Department, our first and highest priority is the safety and welfare of the citizens of Overland Park, and the men and women who protect everyone. The City employs 250 commissioned officers, operating from four police stations throughout the City.

Presently, the City does not utilize body cameras for law enforcement officers. The City believes the decision to study, phase in, or implement such equipment should lie with the council members who were elected to set budgets, establish taxing levels, and determine spending limits, while representing the needs of their constituents. Should the bill be amended to require or mandate that law enforcement officers wear body cameras, we would withdraw our support for this measure.

The City believes the content in Substitute SB 18 is consistent with the recommendations that came out of the Judicial Council's review and recommendations of Open Records law, and appreciates the opportunity to support legislation that makes for a better open government.