



Kansas Press Association, Inc.

Dedicated to serving and advancing the interests of Kansas newspapers

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Feb. 4, 2016

To: Rep. John Barker, chair of the House Judiciary Committee

From: Doug Anstaett, executive director, Kansas Press Association

Re: HB 2550

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee:

I am Doug Anstaett, executive director of the Kansas Press Association. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss our newspaper association's opposition to some language in House Bill 2550.

I've not been able to ascertain just what is driving this legislation, but any time the closing of records is discussed, we at KPA get concerned. The Kansas Open Records Act and other provisions in our statutes are designed to make sure the public has access to information of interest.

Our legal advisers have looked at the legislation and believe it constitutes overkill. We wonder why all the registry records need to be closed. Certainly, we can understand the termination records being subject to closure because those reports would contain personnel information such as reasons for discharge and other disciplinary actions protected under KORA — even though this is not a bill to change KORA itself.

However, we think there is some wisdom in keeping the registry of law enforcement officers available for public inspection. Members of the public could provide a service to the registry by pointing out information that might qualify, or disqualify, a certain person from serving.

Since the registry is the list used by law enforcement agencies when looking at applicants, it seems this might help them avoid hiring mistakes.