

Todd Hart
9838 Chestnut Street
Lenexa, Kansas 66220

March 9, 2016

Testimony on House Bill No. 2709

Chairperson Johnson and members of the House Pensions and Benefits Committee, **I appear before you today in support of House Bill No. 2709.** This bill would correct a possible inequity for the spouse of a long-term KP&F member who has a service connected death.

I am one of the elected members of the KPERS Board of Trustees and a Deputy Chief for the Olathe Fire Department. However, I appear before you today as an individual and I want to make clear that I am not here as a KPERS Trustee, a representative of the KPERS Board of Trustees, or as a representative of the City of Olathe.

Under the current law, a KP&F member with 20 or more years of service, who dies in the line of duty, would leave the surviving spouse with fewer financial resources than had the spouse simply retired and then died the following day.

Under this proposed legislation, the surviving spouse would receive the current 50% of the member's final average salary or the higher amount had the member retired on the 1st of the month following the date of death and elected the joint and 100% survivor benefit.

This is a common sense bill and one that provides the surviving spouse with the years of service earned by the member. In summary, the likelihood of a KPF member dying in the line of duty is low; however, if it should occur the surviving spouse would receive all the years of service earned.

I would urge you to act favorably on HB No. 2709. I would be pleased to answer any questions that you might have for me. Thank you for your consideration.