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TESTIMONY

By

Jerry Monasmith

Before the

SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE

Regarding SB 212

March 12, 2015

Dear Chair Lynn and Members of the Committee:

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my testimony. I am here today testifying on behalf of the Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge #3 in opposition of SB 212.

I am currently a Sergeant with the Topeka Police Department where I have served my community for 20 years. I am also a Captain with the Kansas Army National Guard where I have served my country for 24 years. Senate Bill 212 is unnecessary legislation representing a problem looking for a solution. Currently, our organization does not make contributions to political candidates, nor do we involve ourselves in endorsing candidates. Public Employer-Employee Relations Act (PEERA) already prohibits such activity and there is no need for any additional language banning the use of member dues. As a fraternal organization, our group spends the majority of its time working on resolving disputes with the City, working with local charities and providing a place for fellow officers to find support and assistance from their peers in what is a very dangerous and difficult profession. Our organization does not spend its limited resources engaged in political endorsements.

Secondly, we oppose the prohibition in the bill on the very common practice of members electing to have their dues withheld from their paychecks. This process is entirely voluntary by the employee, and requires no greater resources for the City than the multiple withholdings for charities, taxes and any other voluntary deduction requested by the employee. To discriminate against employee organizations on a totally voluntary deduction advances no real public policy.

Our organization uses its resources to provide assistance and support for our fellow officers. We would respectfully request that any efforts to make it more difficult for us to provide these services be rejected.

Thank you once again for allowing me the opportunity to provide our position on this important matter. I am glad to stand for questions.

Respect Law and Order!