

Testimony
Senate Bill No. 184
Senate Judiciary Committee
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Chairman Wilborn and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ron Trewyn and I serve as the National Bio and Agro-defense Facility (NBAF) Liaison at Kansas State University (KSU). I would like to provide comments regarding Senate Bill 184. This legislation establishes the Kansas Intelligence Fusion Center (KIFC) in Kansas statute.

Fusion centers were created nationwide after September 11th, 2001 to promote the sharing of intelligence information between federal government agencies and state and local governments. They exist in 49 states today – some states having multiple – and they are intended to enhance homeland security. However, fusion centers differ significantly in how they operate. One reason for the functional differences is that every fusion center must comply with the laws in its particular state, and applicable statutes vary greatly from state-to-state.

Establishment of the KIFC began more than a decade ago as a partnership between the Adjutant General and Attorney General in Kansas. The founding premise was that global intelligence assembled by the KIFC would be used by decision makers and policy makers to make better informed, strategic and tactical decisions. That is still the KIFC's focus today.

Other fusion centers across the nation tend to be more law enforcement-centric and focused on criminal investigative work; the KIFC aims at being preventative in nature. In military parlance, it's the difference between working "*left of boom*" (prior to an attack; Kansas model) versus "*right of boom*" (after an attack; other fusion centers). The former can obviously aid with the latter when necessary, but the "*left of boom*" operational vision from day one sets the KIFC apart.

The KIFC is also unique in having bio-threat and cybersecurity teams that include public and private-sector subject matter experts to help analyze global and domestic threats. These outside specialists hold security clearances, which lets them work with KIFC analysts to dissect, interpret and exploit classified data collected around the world. The additional expertise allows the KIFC to do a superior job protecting Kansas, but it also allows the external professionals to do a better job protecting their company, university, hospital, state agency, etc. from biological and/or cybersecurity threats.

I have been a member of the KIFC biothreat team for five years and the unique-in-the-nation role the KIFC serves has been highlighted in meetings I have attended by: (1) the leadership of NORTHCOM and NORAD during a KIFC visit there July 31, 2014; (2) the Vice Chief of the National Guard Bureau during a visit to the KIFC on January 15, 2015; and (3) members of the bipartisan Blue Ribbon Study Panel on Biodefense during meetings at KSU on January 25-26, 2017.

Finally, KSU President Richard Myers has received high-level briefings by KIFC analysts, and he has stressed to me how impressed he is with the exceptional quality of the KIFC team. Of note, his high praise is based on decades of experience with the federal intelligence community.

Thank you.