



To: Senate Judiciary Committee

Date: March 20, 2018

Senator Wilborn and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on House Bill 2516. My name is Carla Lewis, I am an animal control officer in Leawood and the president of the Ks. Animal Control Association. I am here today to represent our members in strong support of HB 2516.

Each year Animal Control Officers respond to countless calls for domestic animals left in cars in dangerous weather conditions. We support HB 2516 for the following reasons:

- The majority of children and animals left in car calls are reported to Law Enforcement by citizens who happen on the scene. Often we have no idea how long they been in the car when the call comes in.
- Temperatures in cars can reach dangerous levels in a short amount of time. Animal Control Officers may not be able to get to the scene in time to save the animal from serious injury or death, and a citizen may be hesitant to damage a care due to civil liability.
- Animal Control resources in many jurisdictions are often stretched thin and they may not be available for an immediate call. Animal Control Officers also do not run code (lights and sirens) to calls and must obey the traffic laws. Travel times may be extensive depending on the size of the jurisdiction and the current call load of the Animal Control Officer.
- Many Animal Control Officers are not given the authority to damage a vehicle in order to access an animal. Some must obtain permission and many have to wait for a sworn Law Enforcement Officer to arrive on scene before access into the vehicle can be obtained. Precious minutes can be lost during this time and innocent lives can be lost.

Our hope is that HB 2516 will increase public awareness about the dangers of leaving your Child and/or Pet in a car when temperatures create a dangerous situation. We hope that this bill will reduce the chance of serious injury or death to vulnerable people and pets by eliminating the threat of civil liability to persons who damage a vehicle in the process of saving a life if they follow the conditions set forth in the bill.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

Carla Lewis
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