



Kansas Sheriffs' Association

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Testimony to the Senate Utilities Committee In Support of SB420 February 28, 2018

Chairman Olson and Committee Members,

Overall, we support SB420. Approximately 51% of the 117 PSAPs are administered by the elected sheriffs. Dispatching services, including 911 are the critical connection between our citizens and our local emergency services.

We view SB420 as having three major components. 1) Amendments to clarify the authority and requirements placed on local PSAP operations; 2) Improved funding for local PSAP operations, and; 3) funding for the proposed management reserve fund. We will focus on the first two and leave the third to those who have been involved in the development of that proposal.

Several of the amendments to the existing 911 Act were worked out between the law enforcement associations and the 911 Coordinating Council to address several areas we believed needed clarification. These include recommended vs required training standard requirements, expenditure pre-approval and appeal processes, and establishing limits to civil penalties imposed on PSAPs. These changes will provide a path to remove some of the issues creating friction between the Coordinating Council and those operating our PSAPs. The penalty clarifications limit civil penalties imposed on PSAPs to \$500. These amendments are all critical to our continued support of the bill.

The 911 dispatching environment is vastly different from large jurisdictions and small jurisdictions. These differences include whether 911 employees are 100% engaged in dispatching or are sharing other responsibilities. There is also a need to maintain local control over this vital connection.

Another amendment to the Act will add authorization to utilize funds for training of dispatch personnel. This would be at the option of the PSAP and allow them to assess all their needs as they establish priorities in their expenditures. This training expenditure is limited to 24 hours of training per employee.

The proposed funding increases are also important to us, particularly those that will create an adjustment in funding for the PSAPs. The highest priority for us is increasing the minimum support for a PSAP that has not been adjusted since the original 911 Act was passed in 2011, while those not receiving the minimum support dollars was adjusted through the \$.07 increase in the fee imposed in 2015. The proposal would increase those minimum payments from \$50,000 per year to \$60,000 per year. As you can see in the charts provided to you in the testimony from the 911 Coordinating Council, those agencies need that increase. Many of our other smaller PSAPS also need more funding. A portion of the proposed funding increases would help meet those needs.

We ask for your support of SB420 including moving the bill forward.

Sheriff Troy Briggs, Haskell County