

# Kansas State Rifle Association

March 14, 2019

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Kansas State Rifle Association, thank for the opportunity to present testimony in support of H.B. 2378, AN ACT concerning firearms; relating to restrictions on the possession thereof in subsidized housing rental agreements; amending K.S.A. 2018 Supp. 75-7c10 and repealing the existing section.

This legislation would prohibit landlords of publicly subsidized apartments from prohibiting the lawful ownership, use or possession of a firearm in rental agreements. Violations of the provisions of this act by a landlord would allow the tenant the ability to recover damages and attorney fees.

The bill would also allow a landlord to impose reasonable rules related to the possession, use or transport of a firearm within common areas. In addition, it would shield a landlord from civil liability in a civil action for personal injury, death, property damage or other damages resulting from or arising out of an occurrence involving a firearm, a firearm component or ammunition that the landlord is required to allow on the property.

The Kansas State Rifle Association stands in strong support of this legislation.

Citizens should not have to choose between protecting themselves through ownership of a firearm and eviction from public housing as Maine resident Harvey Lembo was threatened with. Mr. Lembo, a 67-year-old former police officer and lobsterman obtained a handgun for self-protection after his subsidized apartment in Epping, Maine was burglarized multiple times by thieves looking for pain medicine. The very night after he obtained the gun, the wheelchair-bound senior was forced to use it to defend his life against yet another home invader, this one with a felony record for a violent crime.

Although police did not charge Mr. Lembo, who shot the intruder in his shoulder while in fear for his life, his landlord informed him less than 24 hours after the incident that under the terms of his lease, he would have to relinquish gun ownership or face eviction. These types of situations are not acceptable anywhere in the United States. Passage of H.B. 2378 would ensure it does not happen in Kansas.

Thank you and we urge the Committee to report H.B. 2378 favorable for passage. I am happy to stand for questions at the appropriate time.

Very truly yours,



Jason P. Watkins, Kansas State Rifle Association