



**WRITTEN ONLY Testimony in SUPPORT of Substitute for SB 219
House Judiciary Committee – May 2, 2019**

Good Morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. I'm Kent Cornish, President of the Kansas Association of Broadcasters, a trade association representing nearly 260 radio and television stations in Kansas.

We are in full support of SB 219 which would continue to help law enforcement track down those people who steal precious metals. Our radio and television stations use enormous amounts of copper wiring in the transmission of their signals.

That transmission occurs through equipment located at tower sites, which generally are located in sparse rural areas of a community. Despite FCC required security such as fencing, lighting and alarm systems, the thefts continue. While they appear to come in cycles – perhaps depending on scrap metal value - our best estimate is there are at least one to two transmitter site thefts per year, and in many years multiple thefts.

Replacement costs of these vary from a few hundred dollars to tens of thousands of dollars. But just as devastating is the fact that stations can be knocked off the air or operate at reduced power because of the stolen wiring – a cost difficult to calculate. Just over a year ago a radio group in Wichita had an estimated \$1000 in copper wiring stolen at the site of their three AM station transmitters. However the damage they caused in getting to the copper, has the station still in the repair phase with costs approaching \$100,000!

Anything that can help deter this kind of criminal behavior, and provide law enforcement another tool, is encouraged by all broadcasters. We respectfully ask that you pass SB 219. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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