



Kansas State Lodge

Fraternal Order of Police

Testimony to the
Senate Committee on Commerce
In Opposition of
Senate Bill 175
Mik Shanks, President
Kansas State Fraternal Order of Police
March 18, 2018

Chairperson Lynn and members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing my written testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 175. My name is Mik Shanks and I am the President of the Kansas State Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police. On behalf of all 3,534 members of FOP Lodges throughout Kansas, I am writing in opposition of Senate Bill 175. Senate Bill 175 would cause an administrative nightmare for local FOP lodges throughout the state in that it would permit members to withdraw their membership dues authorization at any time without notifying the FOP. A vast majority of our members are enrolled in the National FOP Legal Defense Plan that provides legal aid to our members when they are involved in critical incidents. As this part of the voluntary participation in the LDP, members have access to attorneys for advice in navigating through the difficult processes that are part and parcel to their involvement in a critical incident. Members, given the dangerous nature of their jobs, are also enrolled in Group Life Insurance Policies that provide added protection to our members in case they are forced to pay the ultimate price for serving our community.

From a logistical perspective, when members pay their dues through payroll deduction, the funds are delivered to the local lodges who then directly pay different benefit vendors, like the Group Life Insurance Company and the LDP among others. If members can quit at any time without first notifying the FOP, the result would be a logistical nightmare for our treasurers and secretaries who volunteer for these positions in our local Lodges. These secretaries and treasurers are active law enforcement officers who receive no compensation for their important work. Senate Bill 175 would create an undue administrative burden on them to retrace members lists to determine who has dropped and when it occurred. This can make an already difficult job nearly impossible. The treasurers are responsible to balance and account for all the local lodge's funds and ensure they are properly forwarded to entities that provided benefits to our members. Dropping without notice would make this effort extremely difficult.

Moreover, members are given an opportunity to drop their membership already. Though each local lodge's by-laws are different, most FOP Lodges allow for a set time during the year to withdraw their membership. For instance, in many lodges, members voluntary agrees to an eleven (11) month

commitment to pay dues and are given the opportunity to withdraw their membership during December of each year. This gives them a thirty (30) day time period to withdraw and allows the treasurers and secretaries of the Local Lodges to receive all withdraws at one time. Again, this withdraw process varies from local lodge to local lodge, but all members are given an opportunity to withdraw, if they so choose.

Furthermore, members may request to withdraw or stop dues deductions because of a financial or personal hardship, and those member requests are almost always granted. Members already have this opportunity making this statutory change unnecessary.

Thank you for your time in reviewing my testimony. The FOP State Lodge and its members oppose the passage of this bill.