



# Kansas Sheriffs' Association

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Testimony to Senate Judiciary Committee  
In Support of SB 212  
March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Chairman Wilborn and Committee Members,

My name is Sheriff Sandy Horton, Retired and I am the Executive Director of the Kansas Sheriffs Association (KSA). I am here today to represent the Sheriffs of Kansas in support of SB 212.

The purpose of the bill is to establish a Coordinator for the Kansas VINE (Victim Information, Notification, Everyday) project within the Kansas Attorney Generals Office. KS VINE is a public safety initiative endorsed by Kansas Sheriffs Association, and we are very grateful to see the system implemented in Kansas beginning in March of 2016. KS VINE automatically notifies crime victims, their friends and relatives, advocates, law enforcement and others that register for notification when a suspect is being released from jail or other status changes in his/her confinement. This notification can be delivered by phone, text message, email, regular mail or all the methods mentioned. This notification provides the victims of crime the power of knowledge so that they can best ensure their safety, and safety of those close to them.

In the past twelve months over 497,560 offender searches have been conducted using the KS VINE website, telephone number (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) and mobile app. There have been over 41,650 custody status notifications delivered to Kansas VINE users and over 7,700 Kansans have registered for VINE.

KS VINE is currently live in 80 of our County Jails and once additional funding is secure will be implemented in the remaining 16 jails in Kansas. It is critical for KS VINE to have a dedicated Coordinator of the program for several reasons. Including training and awareness of not only law enforcement officers and corrections officers across our State, but also for victims and victims' advocates. Without the knowledge that KS VINE exist victims won't know to register for the notification and therefore not receive it.

To help accomplish the awareness trainings KSA has teamed up with the Attorney Generals' Office and Appriss (the VINE provider) to conduct 30 regional trainings

across the State since 2016. 1,004 individuals have been trained on the process of KS VINE and additional trainings are also being planned.

KS VINE is still evolving with additional implementations coming soon. It is time that it has its own dedicated Coordinator to facilitate all the components needed for the successful implementation, awareness coordination, and maintaining the system for this critical victim safety notification system.

It just simply makes sense that a Statewide victims notification system have a Coordinator established in the Kansas Attorney General's Office. Kansas Sheriffs and the Kansas Sheriffs Association support SB 212 and the Kansas Attorney General's efforts to establish this position.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Sandy Horton, Retired  
Executive Director  
Kansas Sheriffs Association