



Kansas **Cable Telecommunications** Association

**Senate Judiciary Committee
Written Only Proponent Testimony - SB219
March 18, 2019
John J. Federico, JD**

Senator Wilborn and Members of the Committee:

My name is John Federico and I serve as the President of the Kansas Cable Telecommunications Association. KCTA members provide advanced telecommunication services including video, voice and broadband to both urban and rural communities across Kansas. We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB219, pertaining to the scrap metal database.

Our member companies, including Cox Communications, have had significant issues with scrap metal theft over the last several years. Specifically, thieves have taken batteries that are in generator units scattered throughout local communities. When these generator units lose power, these batteries activate to ensure the consumer does not lose service. When these batteries are not in place, service is disrupted. This can be especially dangerous when service is cut to locations such as schools, hospitals and law enforcement facilities.

In addition to the loss of service and threat to public welfare and safety, the theft of these batteries is costing our companies a significant amount of resources. Cox alone has lost almost \$500,000 in the last two years in Wichita alone because of these stolen batteries.

Cox and other member companies have taken significant steps on their own to stop these thefts. They have installed security cameras, used decoy batteries with alarms, and have installed security bars to make it harder to remove the batteries. Despite this, the thefts continue to occur.

We believe that SB219 is a good solution to help solve our issues with these thefts while balancing the burden it places on scrap metal dealers. Specifically, the bill does the following:

- It establishes a tonnage fee to fund the database through all of the users of the system;
- It reduces the scrap metal dealer registration fee by half; and,
- It moves the database to the Kansas Bureau of Investigation.

Again, we ask for the Committee's support in helping our Kansas companies find a solution to this major issue.