

State of Kansas
House of Representatives

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Kristey S. Williams
Representative, 77th District

RE: Proponent WRITTEN testimony for HB 2014 – Military Surplus Vehicles

January 21, 2021

Dear Honorable Chairman Proehl and House Transportation Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in favor of HB2014, a bill relating to the registration and regulation of military surplus vehicles. HB 2014, which is almost identical to the amended HB 2420 bill, passed out unanimously by the House in 2021, passed in the Senate Transportation Committee, and then due to Covid – was just one of our legislative ‘casualties’ when it officially died on the Senate Floor on May 21, 2020 (the end of our biennial legislative session).

The bill’s origin was inspired by one of Augusta’s local entrepreneurs who related to me a problem with licensing military vehicles in Kansas. Though the U.S. Military may sell surplus vehicles in Kansas, there is no statute that allows these purchased vehicles to be driven on Kansas roadways. For this local entrepreneur who has developed a start-up business around rehabbing and servicing these vehicles – this was a serious economic disincentive for both buyers of the refurbished military vehicles, specifically Humvees, and sellers. Currently, Global Parts affiliated industries are among our largest private employers in the Augusta community. Without a change in Kansas statutes, this part of Global’s growing business, and others like it, would be restricted by unnecessary and antiquated laws that simply do not support this emerging industry.

The vehicles being updated and made available to civilians are road safe and have the necessary safety features as required by law to safely operate. In fact, the Hummers and the Humvees have the same structural frames – the difference comes down to original purpose and cost to own. To ensure their safety and readiness for public roads, an inspection is required before a license is provided. A requested amendment by Senator Petersen would be to include NATO manufactured vehicles as those included within HB 2014, and with this recommendation, I have no objection.

It’s my hope, in 2021, our Legislature will have the opportunity to finish the work we began in 2020 and update our statutes to allow the licensing of approved military surplus vehicles, upon passing inspection, for a special interest plate. It’s an economic win for our State, for our communities, and for our families interested in this unique investment – and at the same time, it supports our U.S. Military.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide positive testimony for HB 2420.

Sincerely,

Rep. Kristey Williams