



**Kansas Association of
Chiefs of Police**

PO Box 2163
Hutchinson, KS 67504
(620)899-4122



**Kansas Sheriffs
Association**

PO Box 1122
Pittsburg, KS 66762
(620)230-0864



**Kansas Peace Officers
Association**

PO Box 2592
Wichita, KS 67201
(316)722-8433

**Testimony to the Senate Transportation Committee
In Support of SB131
February 24, 2021**

Chairman Petersen and Committee Members,

Our associations support SB131 establishing rules for funeral processions that will enhance safety of all involved. The provisions are consistent with other relative laws. This should help with consistency across the state while preserving additional options under local control.

Funeral processions are handled in a variety of ways across the state. In many of our smaller population areas law enforcement agencies assist funeral directors in directing the processions. In more populated areas of the state law enforcement is used much less often and private escort businesses are utilized for the processions. And in some rural areas the funeral homes just handle it themselves, asking for law enforcement assistance when necessary.

The safe operations of a funeral escort require a concerted understanding between the funeral participants, those conducting the escort, and the other motoring public. Standardization will help improve that understanding resulting in increased safety. It appears all these conditions have been covered in the provisions of SB131.

There is one provision of the bill we want to point out that concerns us. In section 1 subsection (c)(4) on page 2, lines 9-11, it establishes that any separation between the units of the procession less than 300 feet maintains the right-of-way privilege for the procession. We are not sure where that distance originated. Perhaps there is a basis for using it that we aren't aware of. However, we encourage you to consider that 300 feet is about 20 car lengths and generally more than half-a-block. At 20 mph it presents a gap of about 10 seconds, at 30 mph the gap is nearly seven seconds. Keep in mind that at these speeds, the typical yellow light cycle is 3 to 3.5 seconds and the all-red cycles are 2 seconds giving a total transition time of 5 to 5.5 seconds. The gap time proposed in this bill exceeds that 5 to 5.5 second traffic signal transition time by 30-100%. We believe that is a substantial gap in time that could lead other motorist to believe the procession has passed or be unaware of a procession at all, particularly at controlled intersections. We believe a gap of 150 feet (about 10 car lengths and a little less than 1/3 of a typical city block) closely matching the signal timing would be more appropriate for granting the legal right of way.

For your convenience and reference, we have attached the current language of key statutes referenced in the bill.

Ed Klumpp
Legislative Liaison

Relevant current statutes referenced in HB2608

KSA 8-1523. Following another vehicle too closely.

(a) and (b) omitted, not specific to funerals.

(c) Motor vehicles being driven upon any roadway outside of a business or residence district in a caravan or motorcade, whether or not towing other vehicles, shall be so operated as to allow sufficient space between each such vehicle or combination of vehicles so as to enable any other vehicle to enter and occupy such space without danger. This provision shall not apply to funeral processions. (Emphasis added.)

KSA 8-1535 Same; drivers to exercise due care.

Notwithstanding other provisions of this article or the provisions of any local ordinance, every driver of a vehicle shall exercise due care to avoid colliding with any pedestrian and shall give warning by sounding the horn when necessary and shall exercise proper precaution upon observing any child or any obviously confused or incapacitated person.

KSA 8-1723. Additional lighting equipment permitted; lead vehicle of funeral procession.

(a) through (f) omitted, not specific to funerals.

(g) Any motor vehicle may be equipped with head lamps which alternately flash or simultaneously flash when such motor vehicle is being used as the lead motor vehicle of a funeral procession. A funeral hearse may serve as a funeral lead vehicle.