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**Testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee
In Support of HB2326
March 14, 2023**

Chair Warren and Committee Members:

Our associations support HB2326. This bill, as presented, proposes extending the sunset provision for five years and also makes it clear that catalytic converters are included in the list of items reportable to the database at the KBI and the required collection of information on the seller. Those amendments are on page 2, lines 1 and 22-24.

The Scrap Metal Theft Reduction Act has been instrumental in reducing metal thefts and in developing information assisting in the investigation of metal thefts. In July 2020, the KBI activated a scrap metal reporting portal which allowed the record of scrap metal sales to be housed in the KBI Intelligence Unit. Since the implementation of that intelligence data source, it has proven helpful in identifying suspects in these crimes.

That database is currently actively used by 165 investigators across the state. During 2022 there were 4757 law enforcement queries of the data. The number of queries increased by more than 400% compared to 2021.

As you all know, the theft of catalytic converters has been a major theft issue for some time now. Other metal thefts ebb and flow depending on the price of the metal being targeted. But the precious metals in catalytic converters are always high value which makes them a prime target for these thieves. Some of those metals have a value higher than gold. The loss to the victims is high as new replacement costs far exceed the scrap metal value of a stolen one.

We are aware of, and support, the amendments requested in the testimony of the Wichita Police Department and are in concurrence with those amendments. They will further strengthen the catalytic converter provisions in the law.

We do not want to lose this valuable investigative tool. Without legislative action the Act will sunset July 1, 2023. We encourage you to extend the sunset as proposed and to approve the above mentioned amendments.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Ed Klumpp
Legislative Liaison