



To: House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice

From: Nathan Eberline – Kansas Association of Counties

Date: February 16, 2012

Re: House Bill 2584 – Restriction on Knife Regulations

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2584, which will eliminate the capacity for municipalities to regulate knives, such as switch blades, daggers, and razors. The Kansas Association of Counties opposes this bill and its policy implications.

The issue, as it relates to counties, has little to do with the public-safety concerns regarding knives. Though an argument may be made on that front, the real issue is the capacity for communities to determine which regulations make the most sense for that specific locale. Though “Home Rule Authority” can become a catch phrase when locals oppose legislation, it is a principle that has great value in Kansas. Our cities and counties—and the citizens within—have a legacy of setting the policies that meet the needs of the community. Regulating knives has historically been the domain of local government, and this legislation interferes with communities and their capacity to self-assess those needs. HB 2584 cuts against this principle, and it cuts against the important idea of home-rule authority.

The Kansas Association of Counties opposes HB 2584, and we urge this committee to leave the current system in place by voting against the bill. It is important for our cities and counties to continue addressing public safety at the local level, while assessing the unique needs of the community. Thank you for your consideration.

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