

Written Testimony in Opposition of Senate Bill 374
Senate Committee on Transportation

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The Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP) appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition of Senate Bill 374, and we respectfully request the Committee consider our agency's concerns. This bill would allow employees of salvage vehicle pools to perform vehicle identification number (VIN) inspections. Our largest concern is allowing a non-law enforcement entity to perform a VIN inspection that will be changing the title status of a vehicle. Allowing this inspection process to take place outside of law enforcement control increases the potential for fraud.

The purpose of the Kansas Highway Patrol's Motor Vehicle Enforcement Program (MVE) is to protect consumers, discourage auto theft, and prevent the trafficking of stolen auto parts. Auto theft in the United States is big business. Statistics from the Federal Bureau of Investigation indicate that nearly 1.2 million vehicles are stolen annually costing American citizens more than 7.5 billion dollars each year. 30-percent of these stolen vehicles are never recovered.

The MVE program protects Kansas citizens from purchasing stolen vehicles or vehicles that were declared as salvage in another state. We strive to ensure that a vehicle's title stays true so that it cannot be "washed" or altered to increase the value of the vehicle, which ultimately protects the consumer.

The KHP listened to the salvage pools' request to conduct their own inspections to expedite the process. Their claims, however, do not accurately correspond with the number of vehicles they request us to inspect. It has been our experience that the salvage pools frequently have trouble acquiring the ownership documents needed for a proper inspection. This lack of proper documentation often creates the backlog of inspections. Currently, the KHP has the personnel to cover the inspections requested at salvage locations, but we do not have the personnel to provide the type of oversight this addition to our program would require.

In closing, we oppose SB 374 because of the risks it presents to the MVE program that we are statutorily required to maintain, and the risks of fraud for future buyers/consumers. We sincerely thank members of this committee for their consideration of our testimony.

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