



February 12, 2024

To: House Judiciary Committee

Re: HB 2755

Thank you for this opportunity to speak on House Bill 2755. I am Captain Travis Rakestraw with the Wichita Police Department. Over the past couple years, we have noticed people who have been arrested on some very serious felony charges, to include murder, who have more easily bonded out of jail than what had happened earlier in my career. To be honest, I didn't know much about the bail bonds systems in Kansas and thought everyone had to come with 10% to be able to bond out. Our department started learning that people were able to bond out of jail with as low as 1 or 2 percent paid down, even on these very serious violent crimes.

When we started to ask questions, we learned this was legal under current state laws. We were unaware of the different types of bail bonds companies and how this was possible. Of course, we have concerns with how that affects public safety. When someone has committed a violent felony, news of that crime spreads throughout neighborhoods and media to fuel public fear. When the person arrested for that crime is released from jail, those fears can be amplified...especially for the victims of crime. Domestic violence victims have fear their abuser may return. Those involved in gang feuds don't stop feuding just because someone has a pending case. We as law enforcement have concerns that more people will be victimized when someone who has shown a willingness to conduct a violent act is easily able to return back to the community.

We were happy to hear this bill was being introduced to help with some of our concerns. I do not pretend to understand everything in this bill, but I do understand it attempts to address some of our problems we have seen. With regard to people being able to bond out of jail, the Wichita Police Department supports this bill but we would like to make a recommendation for a change. This bill allows for 5% down and 5% financing to bond out of jail. We would support 10% down with no financing for all persons felonies (see recommended wording below). We understand that persons who are accused of non-violent crimes should have the opportunity to bail out of jail and we do not want to stop that practice. Our concerns are based on public safety regarding those who commit serious violent acts or threat of violent acts. Additionally, we ask the question about who regulates the financing. Does this raise opportunities for predatory lending practices by the bond companies.

It is our understanding there may be some questions regarding other parts of this bill from municipal courts and judges. Our support for this bill is limited in its scope to the items that affect law enforcement and public safety.

**Recommended amendment:**

*On page 5, lines 4-6: (B) except for all felony persons crimes, only post a bond after the compensated surety has received at least 1/2 of the required minimum appearance bond premium in one of the following forms:*

Respectfully,

Captain Travis Rakestraw #1793

Wichita Police Department

Patrol North Bureau