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**Testimony of Attorney General Kris Kobach
Proponent for HB 2412
Committee on House Federal and State Affairs
March 7, 2023**

Chairman Carpenter and Members of the Committee:

I urge you to support HB 2412 which would eliminate the state fee for concealed carry permits. This is something that I specifically campaigned on in 2022; and it was clear to me that Kansans strongly support the idea.

Background

Kansas law allows law-abiding gun owners age 21 and older to carry a concealed weapon where allowed. However, individuals with conceal and carry licenses receive added benefits including the ability to legally carry concealed handguns in 36 other states.

In order to be eligible to receive a CCL license, law-abiding Kansans must fill out an application form, attach a passport-type photo, and submit the application and photo to their county sheriff's office. The county sheriff collects a local fee for running a fingerprint record search and then submits the packet to the Kansas Attorney General's Office for processing.

Additionally, applicants must complete an 8-hour weapons safety and training course and obtain a certificate of completion that is submitted with their packet. The total cost for the application process is \$132.50. Of that, \$100 is submitted to the Attorney General's Office.

It's an expensive process, and the prohibitive cost may serve to deter some Kansans from seeking a license. Eliminating the fee may encourage some to get the license and take the training.

This legislation eliminates only the fee to the Office of the Attorney General (OAG). County sheriffs would still collect \$32.50 for their part in the process. The AG's office would simply continue to process the applications without collecting fees. The proposal includes \$1.2 million from the State General Fund to make up the difference.

Of the OAG's annual budget of approximately \$62 million annually, the state fund provides \$6.8 million. In return, the OAG sends money to the state general fund each year. In FY22, the OAG sent \$14.4 million

to the state general fund. In FY23, the OAG has sent \$15.3 million to the state general fund. *In short, the Kansas Attorney General's office sends far more to the State General Fund than it takes out.*

Last year, South Dakota became the first state to eliminate the fee for obtaining a concealed carry permit. We should become the second.

Why the State Fee Should be Removed

There are two compelling reasons to support this bill.

First, one should not have to pay the state a fee in order to exercise a constitutional right. We don't have to buy a license to exercise our right to speak here today. Church goers do not pay the state in order to attend church, and lawful gun owners shouldn't have to pay for the privilege of bearing arms in a manner that is the most common way of carrying in the 21st Century.

Second, it will encourage more people to obtain training and get their CCL. When Kansas became a constitutional carry state, many worried that doing so would reduce the number of people who go through the training to get their CCL. Eliminating the \$100 fee would do much to encourage more people to do so.

I urge you to support HB 2412.