



Kansas Bureau of Investigation

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Before the House Committee on Judiciary
Proponent Testimony regarding HB 2782
Tony Mattivi, Director
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Chairwoman Humphries and Members of the Committee:

The Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI) thanks the Committee for the opportunity to present testimony in favor of HB 2782 which will amend Kansas statutes regarding the death penalty. The State of Kansas has not conducted an execution since 1965 when George York and James Latham were hung after a seven state crime spree where they killed eight people including Otto Ziegler, in Wallace, Kansas. They were convicted on November 6, 1961 and executed less than four years later on June 22, 1965.

The United States Supreme Court voided state laws and temporarily halted the use of the death penalty in 1972. In 1994 the death penalty was reinstated in Kansas. Since then fifteen men have been sentenced to death for their crimes. Two have died of old age and four have been resentenced to life imprisonment due to plea agreements during the appeals process. There are currently nine men on death row in Kansas.

Of those nine, the 1996 brutal rape and murder of Carrie Williams by Gary Kleypas in Pittsburg, Kansas is the oldest crime on the books. As this case, and others of the nine, are approaching the end of all possible legal challenges, HB 2782 provides a new option for the method of carrying out a sentence of death. By adding death by hypoxia, HB 2782 gives the Secretary of Corrections another viable means by which to carry out these sentences. The KBI believes this is an appropriate step due in part to concerns regarding the supply of required pharmaceuticals for death by lethal injection and in part due to the lengthy delay in the execution of these legally imposed sentences.

For those reasons, the KBI requests that the Committee recommend passage of HB 2782.

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