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**Testimony of Chris Carroll, Director of External Affairs – AT&T
Before the Senate Judiciary Committee in Support of HB 2312
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Chairman Owens and Members of the Committee,

My name is Chris Carroll. I am the Director of External & Legislative Affairs for AT&T in Kansas, and I appreciate this opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 2312.

The steady rise in the market price of copper and other scrap metals over the last few years coupled with the state of the economy has led some people to extreme measures, pilfering things like catalytic converters from automobiles, stealing air conditioning units or other pipes and wires from homes or businesses, and even gutting from vacant houses or construction sites.

During the past several years the incidence of theft of copper telephone cable has been steadily increasing. Each year on an enterprise basis, AT&T loses millions of dollars to copper thieves who steal cable from company storage yards, or steal copper wiring and cables from communications towers. These costs include not only the replacement of the cable itself, but the many man hours spent repairing the telephone cable to restore service to those in affected areas. In Kansas, during the last two years alone the replacement cost for stolen copper was almost half a million dollars with nearly 8000 customers placed out of service.

Of particular concern, is that the theft of telephone cable and the oftentimes loss of telephone service places citizens at risk due to their inability to contact 911 emergency services. Thieves also place themselves in danger when climbing utility poles where they could be killed or seriously injured.

AT&T continues to work with local, state, and federal law enforcement officials to apprehend those responsible for these thefts. We ask the Kansas Legislature to approve the passage of House Bill No. 2312 as a means of combating this very serious and growing problem.

I urge your support for House Bill 2312.

Thank You.