



Testimony before the
Committee on Financial Institutions and Pensions
Mike Scribner, President
Teamsters Local Union 696
February 7th 2018

Support HOUSE BILL 2594

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

My name is Mike Scribner and I am a Business Agent and President at Teamsters Local Union 696, which represents more than 1,000 members in Kansas, including all of the Corrections officers for Shawnee County. And I was a correctional officer at Shawnee County for 22 years before becoming the President of Teamsters Local 696.

It is the position of Teamsters Local 696 that this is a good bill. This will allow local control over the pensions and benefits for corrections officers at the county and city level.

The job of a correctional officer is physically and mentally stressful and hard on employees. According to articles, the risk of suicide among corrections officers is 39% higher than the rest of the working population. And research has found that 44% experience some form of post-traumatic stress disorder, while 27% met the criteria for full PTSD. Of all U.S. workers, correctional officers have one of the highest rates of nonfatal, work-related injuries. KP&F would provide these officers with a better path to retirement, one that is sorely needed. It is our position that Correctional officers should have been on KP&F the entire time.

From my experience working in the federal, state and county systems, officers on the county level have a much higher stress workload. This is because they routinely deal with pretrial inmates and inmates awaiting mental health evaluations that are unknown, and we feel this bill give the local government the ability to improve benefits and retain good career officers that know their jobs.

If the local government decides that they would like to improve the benefits of their employees in order to help with retention and staffing then we feel that it should be their decision to do so. Voters elect county and city officials and give the ability to make their communities more safe and improve them and we feel this bill allows that.

In closing we ask for your support for this bill.