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**Testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee
In Support of HB2049 – Crimes Committed Against a Law Enforcement Officer
March 17, 2017**

Chairman Wilborn and Committee Members,

Our associations support HB2049 enhancing penalties for crimes committed against a law enforcement officer who is engaged in the performance of duty, or because of such officer's status as a law enforcement officer. Nationally, assaults on and homicides of law enforcement officers are rising. There have been incidents of officers victimized while off-duty in shootings, arsons, criminal damage, threats, etc. In some of those cases investigation has revealed the officers were targeted only because of their profession with no other preceding interactions. Recently a captain on the Topeka Police Department received threats of physical harm to him and his family indicating they would be targeted while the officer was off duty. Officers have also been the victim of vandalism to their personal vehicles or homes.

Our hope is this bill would provide a deterrence of these crimes from occurring. But if prevention fails, the added penalty is reasonable.

We urge you to take this step to protect those that protect us. Please recommend HB2049 favorably for passage.

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