

## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND PENSIONS

Hon. Jim Kelly, Chairman  
Hon. Boyd Orr, Vice Chairman  
Hon. Gail Finney, Ranking Minority Member

February 11, 2019  
9:00 a.m.

### WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2100

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of HB 2100. This testimony is being presented on behalf of the Kansas District Judges Association (KDJA) by Merlin G. Wheeler, Chief Judge of the Fifth Judicial District, and a co-chair of the KDJA's Legislative Committee.

KDJA wishes to take this opportunity to express our qualified support of the provisions of HB 2100 which provides for cost-of-living adjustments for judges and KPERS retirants who have retired prior to July 1, 2014.

The individuals who would benefit from this legislation are persons who served the citizens of this state and earned retirement benefits. Unfortunately, if for no other reason than inflation, those benefits have eroded significantly over the years. Your retirants in many cases have limited income streams and the failure to periodically adjust for cost of living has resulted in financial hardship. This bill presents the opportunity to alleviate, in small part, that hardship and provide some limited relief from ever-increasing financial pressures.

While our association recognizes that there is a significant fiscal note that accompanies the bill and that the state general fund, as a whole, has limited funds available, one cannot ignore the on-going needs of those who depend upon their retirement benefits. While we would like to see that the cap on the amount of any adjustment is removed so that older retirants are not limited to the possibility of the same increase as more recent retirants, our association recognizes that the state's fiscal health may limit what can be addressed at this time. As its fiscal health improves, as we all hope, we suggest that further adjustments or removal of the cap be considered.

For these reasons, we respectfully support and urge passage of this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Merlin G. Wheeler  
Co-Chair of KDJA Legislative Committee.