

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2448  
House Judiciary Committee

Presented by  
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The Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP) appreciates this opportunity to provide written testimony in support of House Bill 2448. The bill would add enhancements to address a large issue facing law enforcement in Kansas. Automobile theft in Kansas is on the rise. In 2010, the KHP recovered 129 stolen vehicles. In 2019, we recovered 471. This is a 265% increase in the recovery of stolen vehicles over a 10-year period. Automobile theft affects Kansans in several devastating ways.

Increasing automobile theft equates to climbing financial losses to our citizens. Viewing auto theft as merely a property crime does an injustice to those who are victims of the act. Victims will lose wages from the inability to travel to and from work and will have to find ways to pay for a replacement vehicle. This causes a burden on all families, especially those who have a lower household income and liability-only insurance policies. According to the Insurance Information Institute (III), the average cost of a stolen vehicle in 2018 was \$8,407.00. Using this figure, the KHP recovered an estimated \$3.4 million in automobiles in 2018 alone.

Kansans are also affected by automobile theft when law enforcement attempts to apprehend those suspected of the theft. Possessing a stolen vehicle is often the reason a suspect initiates a pursuit with police. In 2010, the KHP had 11 instances where possession of a stolen vehicle was identified as the primary reason a pursuit was initiated. In 2019, this number increased to 63. Remarkably, these figures only represent pursuits where a suspect was apprehended. They do not include pursuits that were terminated before suspects and their motives were identified. It is also important to note that these figures list only the primary reason the pursuit was initiated. Stolen vehicles are often used in higher level crimes such as shootings, burglaries, and robberies.

It is the mission of the Kansas Highway Patrol to “vigorously pursue, apprehend, and prosecute those who utilize Kansas highways for criminal activities”. House Bill 2448 will assist our agency by penalizing those who commit these crimes and choose to put our citizens at risk by initiating police pursuits. The Kansas Highway Patrol asks that you to recommend this bill favorably for passage.

