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**Testimony to the Senate Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee
In Support of SB15
February 6, 2019**

Chairman Olson and Committee Members,

Our associations support SB15. Police Officers, Firefighters and Emergency Medical personnel are often exposed to hazardous substances that can lead to disabling diseases. The primary exposure for law enforcement officers is exposure to diseases through either blood or saliva. These exposures for law enforcement often happen at times when it is impossible to use protective gear, for example, taking a resistive suspect into custody who is either bleeding from injuries or spits on officers.

This bill establishes an officer who is a KP&F member and disabled by certain diseases will qualify for KP&F disability. The bill appears to have adequate provisions to assure the conditions are duty related and that employees are cooperating with preventative treatment and testing after exposure.

Our proposed amendments will cover contagious diseases included in the bill were determined by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment pursuant to KSA 65-128. The 2013 Legislature directed KDHE to develop regulations “. . . providing for the protection of individuals who provide medical or nursing services, clinical or forensic laboratory services, emergency medical services and firefighting, law enforcement and correctional services. . . where the individual may encounter occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials.” It seems only to use this list of diseases established as those diseases we typically encounter.

The exposure risk to law enforcement officers to carcinogens also occurs, although probably not at the risk level of our firefighters. Therefore, we also support the provisions regarding the cancers proposed in the bill.

We ask for your support of SB15.

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