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**Testimony to Committee on House Corrections and Juvenile Justice
Proponent Testimony on HB 2583
January 30, 2024**

Chairman Owens and Committee Members,

The KSA and KACP are providing proponent testimony on HB 2583.

Over the course of the last several years police dogs have either been injured or killed while on duty. As the current law stands, the maximum sentence is, “not less than 30 days or more than one year’s imprisonment.” The associations believe this punishment is too lenient for killing an on-duty police dog.

In the proposed bill the harming of a police dog has been separated from the disabling or killing of a police dog. The change in Section (B) speaks to inflicting harm that does not result in disability or death to a police dog only.

In the new section (c) subsection (1) identifies this crime as a level 4, nonperson felony which is a change that the associations support.

The new section (c) subsection (2) separates if the person inflicts harm and causes disability or death. In this subsection the bill adds if the harm is caused during the commission of fleeing or attempting to elude an officer, interference with law enforcement, escape from custody or aggravated escape from custody. If convicted the defendant will be sentenced to serve at least 90 days in jail and will be fined at least \$10,000. If convicted this would be a level 3, nonperson felony.

In the Wichita/Sedgwick County area in the past 7 years, two police dogs have been killed in the line of duty. The first was WPD K-9 Rooster who was shot and killed on March 18, 2017. The second K-9 killed in the line of duty was SCSO K-9 Bane. He was beaten to death on November 16, 2023.

We are not the only law enforcement agencies in Kansas that have had our K-9’s killed in the line of duty due to suspects intentionally inflicting harm or death to our partners. The KSA and KACP strongly urge this committee to pass House Bill 2583 through committee.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sheriff Jeff Easter, Sedgwick County
KSA Legislative Committee Chair
Representing KSA and KACP