



# *Kansas State Lodge*

## *Fraternal Order of Police*

Testimony in Support of House Bill 2581

Crime of Giving a False Alarm

Presented to the House Committee on Corrections and Juvenile Justice

By: Mik Shanks

Kansas State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police

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Chairman Jennings, Vice Chair Whitmer, Ranking Member Highberger and Committee members, my name is Mik Shanks and on behalf of the approximately 3,000 members of Kansas State Lodge Fraternal Order of Police, thank you for allowing us to offer testimony in support of HB 2581, which increases the penalty for someone convicted of the crime of giving a false alarm.

With emerging technologies "swatting," has developed as a serious problem that involves calling 9-1-1 and faking an emergency that draws an emergency response from law enforcement, usually a SWAT team. Swatting is the use of technology to deceptively cause a heightened emergency and law enforcement response. The individuals who engage in this activity use technology to make it appear that the emergency call is coming from the victim's phone. Sometimes swatting is done for revenge, sometimes as a prank. Either way, it is a serious crime, and one that has potentially dangerous consequences.

Needless to say, these calls are very dangerous to first responders and to the victims. The callers often tell tales of hostages about to be executed or bombs about to go off. The community is placed in danger as first responders rush to the scene, taking them away from real emergencies. The callers vary from attempting to play a joke to orchestrated, intentional plots placing the public and first responders in danger.

In the past 12 months, I have responded to three swatting incidents, all of which had the potential to result in deadly consequences. Fortunately, each of these incidents were safely resolved when first responders determined they were false reports.

The Kansas Fraternal Order of Police Lodge is strongly in support of House Bill 2581 and urge passage. Thank you for allowing my testimony.