



Testimony on HB2547

Submitted To

The House Corrections and Juvenile Justice Committee

By

Kansas Department of Corrections

February 10, 2020

The Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) appreciates the opportunity to offer a perspective on the proposed changes in HB2547. We are neutral on the bill as proposed.

HB2547 proposes to reduce from 90 to 30 the number of days a suspension is extended upon a conviction of driving a vehicle while a person's license is suspended or revoked. And to amend the fees associated with the application for and reinstatement of a license.

We recognize, and have contributed to, the work of the Kansas Criminal Justice Reform Commission (KCJRC) and their Re-Entry subcommittee on this important policy. We also acknowledge there are several important interests that must be balanced in consideration of HB2547, including, but perhaps not limited to, the impact any reduction in fees would have on governmental operations, maintaining incentives for persons to correct behaviors and pay their obligations, and specific to the justice involved population in Kansas, an attainable means to re-obtain a drivers license as a key component of them residing in our Kansas communities.

Of the approximately 6,000 persons released from a Kansas prisons annually, 50% have issues relating to obtaining a driver's license. That license is a pre-requisite credential for nearly all pro-social and sustainable wage types of employment. And the criminal justice system often, rightfully so, expects the justice involved population to engage in employment as a condition imposed by the court and/or as a condition of release. A justice involved person without a driver's license, is less likely to be employable and to attend needed treatment and programs, both of which make them more likely to be a risk to public safety.

All effort to reevaluate current policy, such as this recommendation by the KCJRC which is proposed in HB2547, is appreciated by the KDOC. We appreciate that the Committee, and the Legislature as a whole, are discussing the public policies of Kansas as they relate to the criminal justice system. And will strive to be a resource to you as you continue your policy work.

Thank you