



**Kansas Association of
Chiefs of Police**

PO Box 780603
Wichita, KS 67278
(316)733-7300



**Kansas Sheriffs
Association**

PO Box 1122
Pittsburg, KS 66762
(620)230-0864



**Kansas Peace Officers
Association**

PO Box 2592
Wichita, KS 67201
(316)722-8433

**Testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
In Support of SB219
May 2, 2019**

Chairman Patton and Committee members:

Our associations support SB219. In 2015, SB11 was passed making statute changes to address the problem of metal theft, including the creation of a statewide database. At the time, Kansas was seeing major losses from metal thefts that were targeting utility companies, irrigation systems, and other farm and ranch related losses. This was a new trend in addition to an existing long-term problem of copper being stripped from vacant buildings, air conditioner units being stolen, wiring stripped from highway lighting systems, and even stolen highway guardrails. Many industries were reporting these types of losses as well, including the aircraft industry in Wichita.

During a recent response to an inquiry of our members, most respondents reported these thefts are currently remaining steady, with a few reporting increases and some reporting decreases. Many respondents added they expect the problem to increase again when scrap prices go up. We also know that utility service providers, government agencies, small businesses, and home owners have suffered significant losses because of these thefts.

Part of the plan in 2015 SB11 was a statewide database of persons selling metal to scrap yards for recycling. Unfortunately, that part of the plan never became a reality. This bill creates an alternative approach to creating that database.

We know these criminals often transport these stolen items to other jurisdictions to convert their stolen goods. They know a weak link in our system is the ability to track the stolen items to scrap yards away from the jurisdiction of the criminal act. The database proposed in this bill will help close that weak link.

These databases are more helpful than just the on-site paper logs used today or systems used to issue alerts for property after it is stolen. Using a database like the one envisioned, we can analyze the data to look for trends allowing us to focus on new patterns of items stolen and persons showing a pattern of suspicious transactions. This allows us to get in front of the problem and interact with the persons involved sooner. The alert systems only work after the fact on the items already stolen.

We know these databases work to reduce crime by providing information law enforcement can act on more quickly to intercede in the criminal activity. We have used these type of systems for years with items pawned and sold to pawn shops. We have been told that some states who have these types of statewide systems have reported significant reductions in these crimes after implementation.

We encourage the committee to move this bill forward.

Ed Klumpp
Legislative Liaison

Relevant Information from KSA 50-6,109 and KSA 50-6,111

We have heard several questions raised in relation to vehicle parts as listed in the current KSA 50-6,110 as can be seen on page 4, lines 28-30 of the bill. Vehicle part is defined in statute for the purposed of the Scrap Metal Theft Reduction Act, but it is not in the bill. It is found in KSA 50-6,109 and only includes, "the front clip consisting of the two front fenders, hood, grill and front bumper of an automobile assembled as one unit; or the rear clip consisting of those body parts behind the rear edge of the back doors, including both rear quarter panels, the rear window, trunk lid, trunk floor panel and rear bumper, assembled as one unit." Catalytic Converters are included because they fall under the definition of "regulated scrap metal" in KSA 50-6,109, "any item, in any form, for which the purchase price. . .was primarily based on the content of [at least one of a list of metals]." They contain platinum, palladium, and rhodium, all which are listed metals included in the definition.

It is also worth noting that food or beverage containers made of aluminum are not included in the reportable items. They are excluded by definition in KSA 50,6,109(b)(2).