

To: Senate Transportation Committee

From: Deborah Barnes, Staff Attorney

Date: January 30, 2020

RE: Testimony in Opposition to SB 275 WRITTEN ONLY

I want to thank Chairman Petersen and the members of the Committee for giving the League of Kansas Municipalities the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to SB 275 as it is now written.

SB 275 would make adjustments to the arrangements now in place for sanctions, where a person who has had their driving license suspended receives a further conviction for driving without a license.

In particular, SB 275 removes the requirement to add 90 days to the original period for suspension of driving privileges.

Safety on our roads is of paramount importance, and our law enforcement officers need to have effective sanctions available where people violate the law in this area. That being said, as the Criminal Justice Commission and other groups, such as the Kansas Supreme Court Ad Hoc Committee on Municipal Courts, have looked at this issue, it has become apparent that there are individuals in Kansas that have had licenses suspended due to failing pay fines or appear in court. There are instances where these individuals have made arrangements with the courts following suspension of their license to make payment plans or perform community service to pay their court fines; however, in order to this, they often need to get back on the road in order to work. The League understands the desire to temper the hardship caused by being without a driver's license while still providing a disincentive to ignoring a suspension.

The Kansas Criminal Justice Reform Commission has set out legislative proposals for 2020. One of these proposals goes to the heart of the problem this bill is attempting to solve. The recommendation was to reduce the term of continued suspension after fees have been paid off from 90 days to 30 and reducing the reinstatement fee. The League supports this recommendation as a common-sense middle ground approach.

The League respectfully requests that the Committee amend this bill to match the Criminal Justice Reform Commission's recommendation before passing the bill to the full Senate.