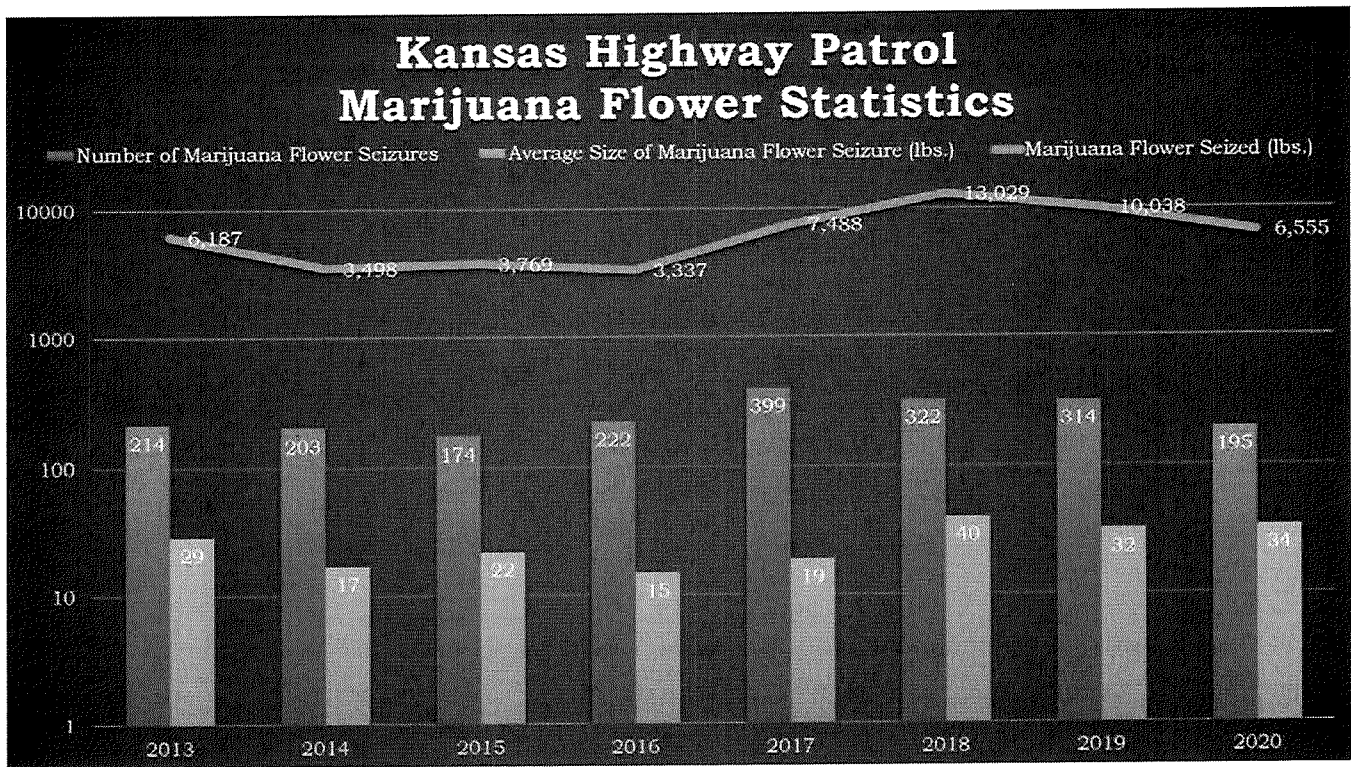


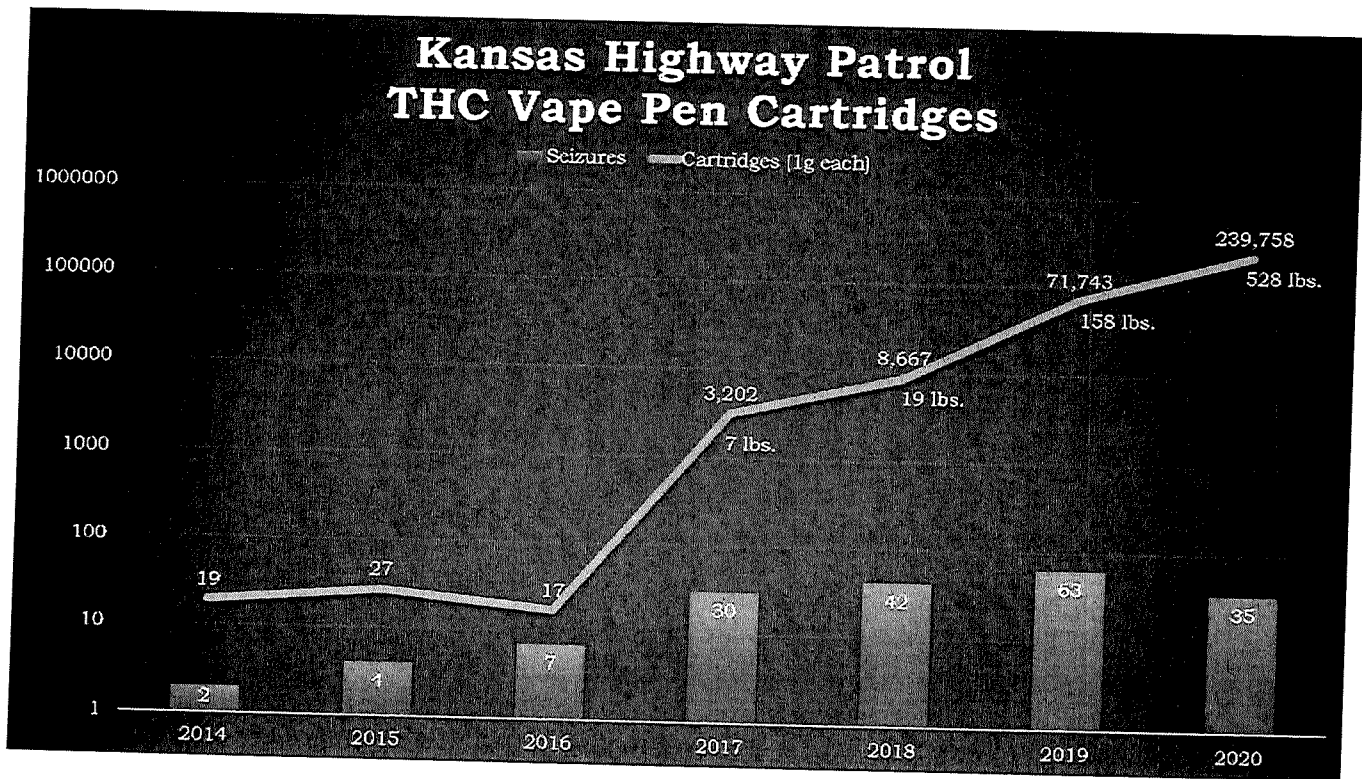
Written Neutral Testimony - House Bill 2184
House Committee on Federal and State Affairs

Prepared by
Colonel Herman T. Jones
Kansas Highway Patrol

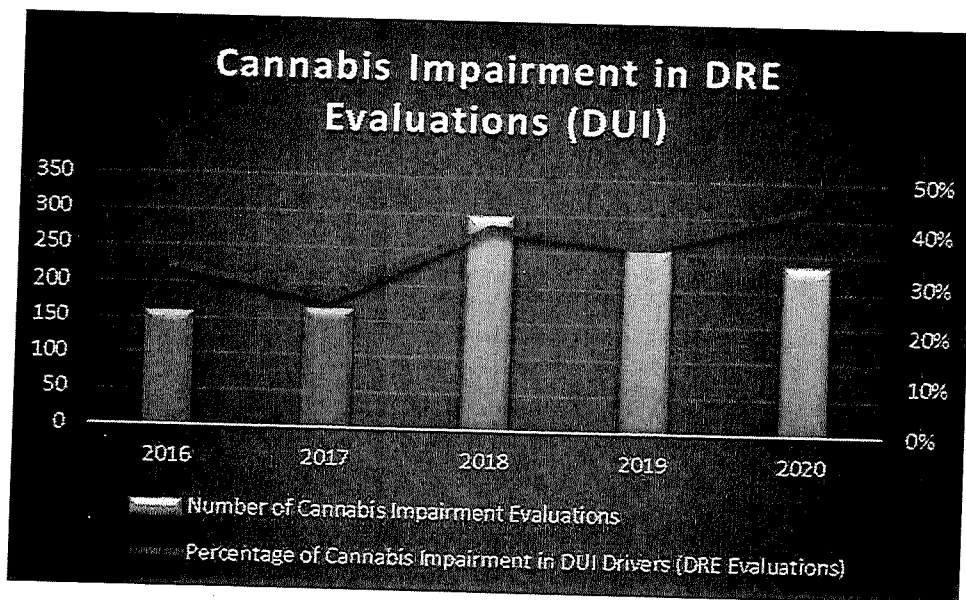
February 25, 2021

The Kansas Highway Patrol appreciates this opportunity to provide written neutral testimony concerning House Bill 2184. The bill establishes the Kansas medical marijuana regulation act. We recently compiled the following statistical information as it pertains to various facets of marijuana related incidents involving agency operations. These statistics provide insight into the number of seizures and drugged driving arrests by specially trained officers (Drug Recognition Experts or DREs). We offer this information to the Committee as it considers the merits of medicinal marijuana and the undeniable fact that traffic and public safety will be negatively impacted by an increased prevalence of and access to this drug.





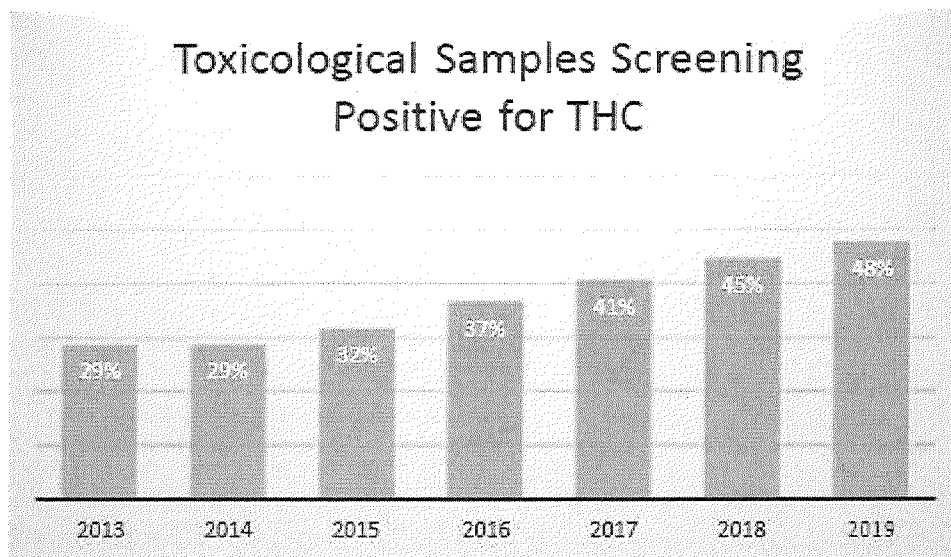
Kansas' Drug Recognition Program has shown a significant increase over the last five years in marijuana impaired drivers. In 2016, DREs from across the state conducted drug impairment evaluations and concluded that 158 of their subjects were impaired by cannabis. In 2017, this number increased to 165 evaluations where cannabis was determined to be the impairing substance. In 2018, our numbers saw a dramatic increase. DREs concluded that 297 subjects were under the influence of marijuana. This was an increase of 180% from the previous year. In 2019, DREs determined that 254 of their subjects were impaired by cannabis.



Last year, DREs found that 234 subjects were impaired by cannabis. In 45% of all evaluations conducted in 2020, DREs concluded that cannabis was an impairing substance. This is up from 32% in 2016 and 26%

in 2017. It is important to note that these figures only include those drugged driving arrests where a Drug Recognition Expert completed an evaluation. Due to the complex and lengthy DRE certification process, less than 100 of Kansas' more than 7,000 law enforcement officers are so certified. Consequently, the incidence of driving under the influence of marijuana is likely to be significantly higher than the data suggest.

Drug Recognition Evaluations indicated an increase in the number and percentage of THC positive drivers over the preceding three years. In 2016, 94 of the toxicological samples submitted were positive for THC, which amounted to 54% of the total toxicological samples analyzed. In 2017, 109 samples were positive for THC, which amounted to 50% of the samples analyzed. In 2018, those numbers rose to 232 samples positive for THC, which amounted to 62% of the samples analyzed. While data for 2019 are included, 232 toxicological analyses are pending. The number of THC positive samples for 2019 is likely to grow once analyses are completed and included in these data.



(Statistics were taken from the Kansas DRE Web Portal. Only those evaluations and toxicology results entered are included.)

Unfortunately, Kansas crash statistic metrics requested from the Kansas Department of Transportation do not distinguish between specific drugs and are therefore not included in our testimony.

As the Committee and the Kansas Legislature as a whole considers the public health benefits of medicinal marijuana, the Kansas Highway Patrol trusts that the impact of this bill to traffic and public safety will also be considered. In every instance where marijuana has been legalized for any purpose, the overall safety of the general public has been negatively impacted. We implore the Committee to consider all facets of the effects of medicinal marijuana before enacting any legislation that makes vehicular travel and life in general more dangerous. We sincerely thank members of the Committee for their consideration of our testimony.

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