

SESSION OF 2021

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON SENATE BILL NO. 167

As Recommended by Senate Committee on
Transportation

Brief*

SB 167 would expand the definition of “authorized emergency vehicle” in the Uniform Act Regulating Traffic on Highways to include a vehicle operated by an authorized person for an electric or natural gas public utility. The bill would use definitions of “authorized person” and “public utility” in continuing public utility law.

The bill would amend a list of vehicles currently including fire department and law enforcement vehicles, ambulances, and tow trucks that a board of county commissioners need not designate as authorized emergency vehicles to add motor vehicles operated by an authorized person for an electric or natural gas public utility when such motor vehicles are utilized for emergency repairs that are needed on electric utility or natural gas equipment to restore necessary services or ensure public safety.

The bill also would make technical changes.

Background

The bill was introduced by Senator Corson.

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

Senate Committee on Transportation

In the Senate Committee hearing, Senator Corson and a representative of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 304 provided **proponent** testimony. A representative of Evergy provided written-only **proponent** testimony. The proponents described the bill as a step to improve safety for utility workers. They noted the Kansas “move over” law requires drivers of motor vehicles approaching a stationary authorized emergency vehicle that is flashing its warning lights to move into a lane not adjacent to the authorized emergency vehicle or, if not on a highway with multiple lanes of traffic in the same direction, to reduce the speed of the vehicle and proceed with due caution (KSA 2020 Supp. 8-1530).

Representatives of the Kansas Association of Counties (KAC) and the League of Kansas Municipalities provided written-only neutral testimony, noting the rights and responsibilities of drivers of emergency vehicles.

No other testimony was provided.

Fiscal Information

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, the KAC states enactment of the bill would have a negligible fiscal effect on counties.

Utilities; authorized emergency vehicle