

Representative Kent Thompson, Chair  
Representative Emil Bergquist, Vice Chair

Committee on Local Government

Tuesday, February 11, 2020

Testimony in Support of H.B. No. 2580; City unilateral annexation powers eliminated unless property owners consent to annexation.

Submitted by:  
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Honorable Chairman Thompson and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to give written testimony regarding H.B. 2580; I support the bill. I believe this bill, if passed into law, will help municipalities grow in a more fiscally-responsible and directed way compared to what the current law allows, while at the same time helping to protect the property rights and self-determination of individual land owners.

One of the foundational duties of government is to balance majority rule with minority rights. I ask that this committee move HB 2580 forward with an eye toward protecting both the rights of the minority landowner and the financial interests of municipalities. Cities with an appetite for rapid expansion may have the goal of increasing financial wellbeing, but the opposite effect is sometimes seen when the extra services, infrastructure, drainage issues and utilities end up increasing overall tax burden instead of decreasing it.

The League of Kansas Municipalities may have some well-prepared arguments against this bill. I remind the committee that taxpayers targeted for annexation vastly outnumber tax-receiving municipalities who band together and use tax dollars to work for their own motivations. I respectfully ask that you give appropriate weight to those testifying in support of this bill so that it can never be said that the legislature is in alliance with the League against the people.

I am hopeful the patient effort and determination of my representative and fellow citizens will have the desired effect to change the law and keep Kansas a great place to live for city dweller and county landowner alike for generations to come.