

Date: February 12, 2020
To: House Committee on Local Government
From: Southwest Kansas Coalition
Re: Written Testimony in Opposition of House Bill No. 2580

Chairman Thompson and members of the House Committee on Local Government:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition of House Bill No. 2580. The Cities of Dodge City, Garden City and Liberal are members of the Southwest Kansas Coalition. The Coalition was formed as a means to collectively and actively participate in policymaking decisions impacting the region and our residents.

This subject is a priority topic in our Legislative Agenda.

Our policy on annexation states:

“The ability of cities to grow is inherent to the ultimate success of annexation powers as they are currently established in state statute. The current statutory framework was amended in 2011 to balance the interests of cities and those in areas to be annexed. Further amendment would shift this balance in a way that would impede orderly growth. Therefore, SKC opposes any change that limits the authority of cities to grow through annexation.”

House Bill No. 2580 seeks to eliminate authority for cities to utilize “unilateral annexation”.

The ability to unilaterally annex land is a critical aspect of preserving the ability of a community to self-determine what it wants of and from its local government. A specific process must be utilized in annexation, including development of a service plan, public notice and public hearing. The process has worked well for many communities as a tool for growth, while benefitting residents through expanded services. This tool should not be eliminated.

The Southwest Kansas Coalition strongly urges this Committee to reject House Bill No. 2580.

Respectfully,



Cherise Tieben
City Manager
City of Dodge City



Matt Allen
City Manager
City of Garden City



Calvin Burke
City Manager
City of Liberal

